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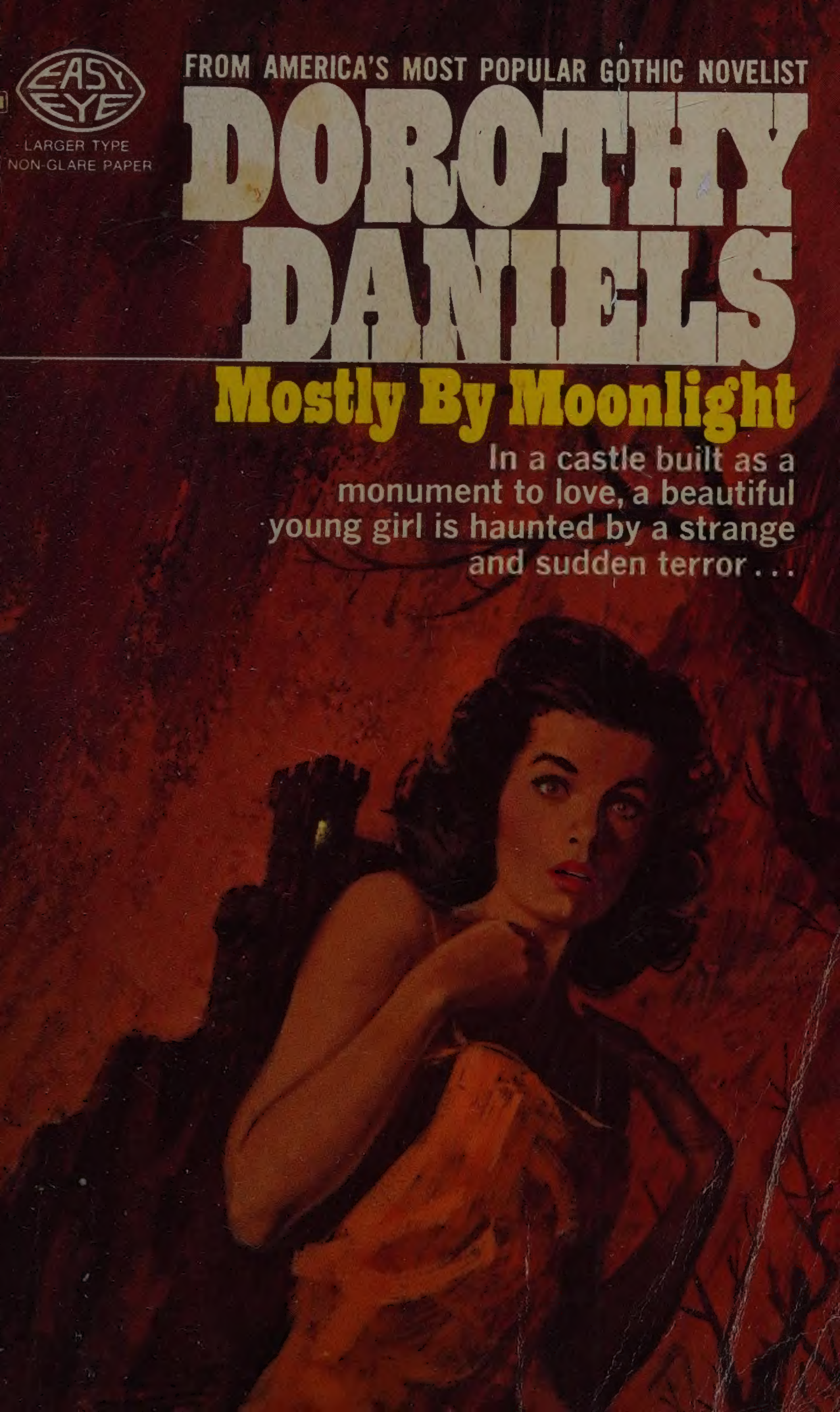
FROM AMERICA'S MOST POPULAR GOTHIC NOVELIST

DOROTHY DANIELS

Mostly By Moonlight

In a castle built as a monument to love, a beautiful young girl is haunted by a strange and sudden terror . . .



THE MENACING DARKNESS

Eve told herself she was being silly. There was but one way out of this room—down the stairway she'd come up—and no one had passed her. She refused to be frightened. And there was the matter of the strange blue lights . . . She wanted to know about them.

Then the french doors banged open and the wind swept into the room. The lamp was blown out.

Eve screamed . . .

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DOROTHY DANIELS

Mostly By Moonlight

LANCER EASY EYE EDITIONS

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A LANCER BOOK

MOSTLY BY MOONLIGHT

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ONE

It had been a three-and-a-half-day coach trip from Boston, but now the ordeal was almost over. In thirty minutes they'd arrive at East Machias, which was about as far north as one could go in Maine by rail.

What had started out, on August 15th, 1871, as an exciting journey had turned into spine-breaking, sooty, sleepless and seemingly endless hours for Eve Warren.

She was dozing, long ago heedless of the fact that slumped down this way in the red plush-covered seat, she was wrinkling her dress. She had wanted to present a reasonably good appearance when she got off the train at East Machias, but she'd even forgotten that in her exhaustion. She longed for nothing more than water and soap to cleanse and soothe her tired body.

Her father, Professor Perry Warren of Harvard, regarded her affectionately. He was tall, lean and distinguished-looking without being handsome. His hair was auburn with not a tinge of gray and he affected side whiskers and a mustache which added to his appearance.

Even though Eve was dozing, he could see fatigue etched in her face. He sympathized with her, wishing he hadn't brought her along. Not only

because the trip was so exhausting, but when they finally reached Indian Cove, he had no idea what they'd find there and it worried him.

Ever since her mother had died when Eve was fourteen, she had taken it upon herself to care for the Charles Street residence where she'd been born. She had a maid and a cook, and no great strain was ever placed upon her. He feared the northern Maine wilderness, coupled with the rugged way of life, would be too much for her.

Not that Professor Warren, being a Doctor of Philosophy as he was, would be against letting Eve face an environment that would be a challenge in its contrast to what she'd grown up in, but to him, she didn't appear quite ready for it, even at twenty.

Her mother had been frail, a lovely creature, of slight build with finely outlined features, and Eve closely resembled her. She was, Professor Warren believed, much sturdier than her mother had been and yet he disliked making her face up to this climate, for it was obvious the vacation would probably last well into the severely cold weather. Also, the problem which brought them here seemed almost unsolvable.

How could a man sell a castle in Maine? An honest, life-size, stone-by-stone replica of a Scottish castle which Jabez Warren had admired and caused to be duplicated on the coastline of Maine as his home and as a tribute to Elizabeth, his young and lovely bride.

Sell it, Professor Warren must—and live in it while he found a buyer who was willing to saddle himself with such an enormous place which, as

local legend had it, held the further liability of being haunted. Jabez had been a wealthy sea captain, but everything he accumulated over the years had gone into this place.

Professor Warren glanced at his pocket watch and gently shook Eve awake. As she stirred herself, opening her large, violet-colored eyes, he realized again what an attractive daughter he had.

Her long blonde hair was slightly disarrayed now, but ordinarily she wore it piled softly on her head in golden, silken curls that looked as if they'd tumble to her shoulders at a touch, but always managed to stay in place. A soft fringe of hair covered her brow.

Her face was not quite round, not quite oval, but somewhere between the two. Her mouth was slightly more generous in size than the pert little nose above it. Despite the coal soot, ash and cold winter weather in Boston, her skin had the camellia-like fairness of a southern plantation belle.

Her body was trim, she was very good at tennis and played a fast game of volley ball. She was popular with the opposite sex for she had a warmth and charm which was completely natural. It didn't take long for Professor Warren's students to visit his home, ostensibly to discuss their studies. Yet somehow, they always seemed to wind up with Eve. However, the Professor didn't mind, for Eve knew how to conduct herself and, he always thought with pride, so did his students. Thus far, though, Eve had met no one who had captured her heart.

"Not much more than half an hour," he reminded her.

"Oh." She sat up, startled at the sudden passage of time and the fact that their journey was now almost over. She looked out of the window at more forests of which Maine seemed to be solidly constructed. But it was a pleasant morning and the sun's rays drenching the trees and darting like lances between the leaves and branches gave a living quality to the forest. She saw a wide-antlered stag watching the train with what seemed to her a colossal disdain of this invader.

She turned her attention to her costume and sighed in dismay as she tried vainly to brush the wrinkles out of her dress. It was a Polonaise style which she'd had made for traveling, and she'd been so proud of it. The skirt was a full four yards around the hem and though flat and gored in front, it was full behind and every inch of the fabric seemed disheveled. Even the bodice, though fitted, looked as though she had slept in it, as indeed she had.

Professor Warren chuckled and said, "Never mind. Everyone is aware of the rigors of traveling."

"I know, Papa." Eve's smile was rueful. "But I wanted to look nice when we got there."

"We're almost there, and I think it's time to tell you about Jabez and the castle," her father said. "I refrained from it before because I wanted everything fresh in your mind."

"I'd like to hear all about it." She again frantically tried to brush wrinkles out of her skirt, but it was hopeless. "How soon before we arrive?"

"At East Machias—about forty minutes. Then there'll be a stage, I suppose, to Indian Cove. That shouldn't take more than three or four hours."

"At least we'll be out of this sooty car," she said. "I've smelled enough coal smoke to last me for a long time." She settled back and gave him a sunny smile. "Now tell me about this older brother of yours. My uncle whom I never saw."

"Jabez always had a notion about going to sea. Even when he was very small—and I was smaller, because he was seven years older than I. He used to whittle out canoes and schooners and sail them in the lake at the park near our home. When he was seventeen, he just up and went. Oh, he told mama and papa he was going to sea, but he didn't ask permission, he merely informed them. As he'd already signed up on a ship bound for England, there wasn't much could be done about it, but I remember how envious I was of him."

"How long since you saw him, Papa?"

"Oh . . . he's been dead these two years and I guess it was fifteen before that when I learned the *Julia B* was in Boston harbor and I went down to visit with him."

"It was his own ship by then?" All Eve knew of her uncle was a life-sized portrait which he'd had done in some Oriental country and sent to her father. The Asiatic artist had painted him in the grand manner, with his brass-buttoned, long uniform coat, cockade hat, spyglass under one arm —but he'd made his features rather Chinese looking so Eve didn't exactly know what he had looked like in real life.

"Oh yes. It wasn't too much of a ship, but he

went all over the world in her. He was coming along very fast then, and he told me he was saving to buy a large, new ship."

"The *Julia B* must have been named for his wife," Eve observed.

"Oh no—he wasn't married then and he hadn't yet met Elizabeth. I asked him about the name of the ship and he said she was a cantankerous, mean, treacherous old tub so he'd named her after a girl he had almost married. I think she jilted him and he resented it. He bought his new ship a year later. A new Blackwaller, laid down in Scotland, as big as a fifty-gun frigate. In fact, she could have been converted into a frigate of war, merely by adding the guns. She carried three hundred and more passengers."

"What was Uncle Jabez like, Papa? I mean, was he a ship's captain who drove his men and trod the deck like a martinet?"

"I understand he was very strict, but eminently fair. I know for a fact that when he got his new ship—and a fine ship she was too—every man-jack who served on the old one shipped over to the new. Of course, he had to sign on many more hands, and in a very short time he was known as one of the wealthiest and most successful of the captains who owned and sailed their own ships."

"When was he married, Papa?"

"Three years ago. I never met his bride, but I saw him and his new ship a year before that. I think a voyage or two made him comparatively wealthy, and then he met this Scotch girl and instantly fell in love with her. She came of a fine family and lived in a castle which was hundreds

of years old. Her father was an Earl and a highly respected man. She didn't want to leave Scotland and especially her castle, but Jabez was a man not to be denied. He was an American and he meant to live in the United States."

"It must have been romantic, though—the tough sea captain and the beautiful daughter of an Earl."

"Oh, the romantic part came a little while later. Elizabeth agreed to marry him the next time he put into port. But without her knowing it, he had caused architects and engineers to detail the castle right down to the last stone and he had the duplicate built on a cliff overlooking, not the moors where the original was located, but the sea which Jabez loved and was such a part of."

"Oh, Papa, how surprised she must have been."

"No doubt." Professor Warren chuckled. "Unfortunately, Elizabeth couldn't endure the severe weather of Maine, though I daresay that her own country wasn't much better. Anyway, after the first winter she took sick and late in the spring she died."

"It's like a novel," Eve marveled. "I wouldn't be surprised if she haunted the castle."

"To be frank with you, it's said that she does."

Eve's eyes sparkled and her face flushed slightly in excitement. "Really? An honest-to-goodness ghost?"

Warren laughed. "I didn't want to tell you because I was afraid you might be alarmed, but it seems you're not superstitious."

"Of course there's no such thing as a ghost, Papa. Don't tell me you believe in them."

"Up to now, no, I don't. But remember, that castle has stood empty for two years, and while a few people have been interested in buying it, nobody ever did. There must be some reason. Though I must say if there is a ghost, it's more likely my brother's. He was a strong, persistent man."

"Oh, Papa, who wants to buy a castle? It's probably enormous and drafty."

"I suppose it is. However, the castle took every dollar Jabez had. It's worth more than half a million, Eve. We'll never get anywhere near that sum for it, but it does represent all that Jabez left and I'm his sole heir. Naturally I would like the money. It would make a wonderful nest egg for you, my dear."

"Wouldn't it, though," she said. She was looking out of the window at a few unpainted shacks that flashed by. They seemed primitive and ugly to her, but at least they were signs of civilization.

This was no Pullman car. There were none on this line, so the best she could do with her toilette was to obtain some water from the drinking supply and dab it on her face. She did manage to get her hair into some semblance of order and put on her hat, slipping the elastic underneath her curls.

She didn't look forward to the two- or three-hour stage journey to the castle. Even if the trip turned out to be pleasant, she dreaded what they'd find at the castle. A great old place closed up for almost three years. It was bound to be dusty, cobwebbed, stuffy, and it would likely take an army of servants to give it the kind of scrubbing it needed.

At the start, this had seemed like a heaven-sent adventure to break into Eve's ordinary life, but now she wondered if she was wise in insisting on going with her father. She was, however, not a girl to let such matters bother her long. When she was helped off the train by her father, she came alive.

This was a fairly large town, as Maine towns go, and a number of people had come down to see the train puff and steam its way to a stop at the depot platform. The town itself lay just beyond, and it seemed like a dreary place to Eve.

Then a tall, slim young man approached them. His smile was friendly as he removed his hard felt hat and bowed. He was lean-featured, had the merest fringe of side whiskers, and was wearing a single-breasted morning coat above striped trousers.

"Do I have the honor of addressing Professor Warren and his daughter?"

"You do," Professor Warren replied in a puzzled voice.

"Permit me to introduce myself. I am Elisha Tuttle. My father is Howard Tuttle."

Professor Warren extended his hand promptly. "I am extremely grateful for the help your father has rendered me thus far, but I also deeply appreciate your having met us. Mr. Elisha Tuttle, my daughter, Eve Warren."

He bowed to her, and Eve regarded him with considerable interest, for he was undoubtedly a very handsome young man of about twenty-four. She liked the firmness of his mouth and chin and the broad lines of his forehead. His eyes were a

deep brown, his hair a somewhat lighter shade of the same color.

"Charmed," he said politely. "It is a delight to make your acquaintance, Miss Warren."

"Thank you," Eve said happily, and thought the long journey was worthwhile after all.

"I was sent by father to meet you and drive you to our home. It's eighteen miles from here and two miles from your brother's castle, Professor Warren. Let me help you with your baggage, please."

"How gracious of you, Mr. Tuttle," Eve said and watched with interest, as Elisha Tuttle signaled a coachman who was standing by. He took charge of the baggage, storing it in the large and rather resplendent carriage which waited for them.

In a few moments they were aboard and the last leg of the trip begun. Elisha sat opposite her, riding backwards, and the adoration in his eyes was not only easy to read, but somewhat embarrassing, though she couldn't convince herself that she didn't enjoy it.

He pointed out some of the fine houses in East Machias, with a capsule description of the people who lived in them. Almost without exception they were the familes of seafaring men. Everything was so clean and fresh. Each house sparkled, mostly with white paint. The town was far enough inland so the salt-laden ocean breezes didn't reach this point.

Soon they were following a dirt road which led due east, often through stately forests of tamaracks, firs, ash and a tree which Eve didn't recognize. Elisha told her it was called Balm of Gilead.

It was a tall tree, with heartshaped leaves and pointed at the top. It gave off a pungent but pleasant odor of resin. The sighing of the wind through the tamaracks made her believe they were nearing the sea, but then she realized they still had a long distance to travel.

"It's father's wish," Elisha said, "that both of you stay at our home for the time being. Mother has arranged one wing of the house for your pleasure and we would be greatly honored, sir."

"I'm grateful and do appreciate it, but I'm afraid not," Professor Warren said with a shake of his head. "I want to get the business of the sale of the castle attended to as quickly as possible. That means I must inspect the premises and make it presentable for any prospective buyers. I have to return to my classes in September."

Elisha didn't sound hopeful. "Selling the castle isn't going to be a simple matter, sir. Unless you merely wish to rid yourself of it for whatever pittance some speculator would pay."

"No, I wish to get its full value if I can and see to it the buyer is a responsible and fit person to own it. My brother Jabez put much of himself into the place. I would hardly like to insult his memory by merely getting rid of it."

"What's the castle like?" Eve asked Elisha.

The eagerness of her voice and her sparkling eyes told him that she was brimming with curiosity. Looking at that lovely face made him wish they'd accept his mother's hospitality. He found her youth and beauty both refreshing and enticing.

"It's very large, of course. There are thirty rooms."

"Good heavens!" Professor Warren cried out. "Thirty rooms!"

"It's a replica of the original in Dunbar, Scotland, sir," Elisha said. "Those old Scottish castles were very large because they often entertained many wayfarers and sometimes put up small armies of knights or warriors—or whatever they were called in those days—who'd be riding through or perhaps doing battle somewhere close by. Your brother, Professor, did not adapt his version of the castle to our more modern times."

"I suppose not. What condition is it in? I presume you have been there."

"Oh yes, several times. The castle will very likely last forever. It's built mostly of New Hampshire granite. It has battlements, gables, towers, even a few projections that look surprisingly like minarets."

"Are the furnishings intact?" Eve asked, with the practicality of a female who knows the household chores will be her problem.

"Yes, to a reasonable extent. A great deal of work will be required to make it comfortable, and even then, during our severe winters, I doubt you could heat the place."

"I don't intend to be here during the winter," the Professor said. "However, if it becomes necessary, I think we could make two or three rooms do and seal them off from the rest of the place."

"I'm dying of curiosity to see it," Eve exclaimed.

"You'll find it very impressive at first, Miss

Eve, but a taskmaker that will likely cause you to wish you'd never seen it."

Professor Warren didn't ask Elisha any questions about the death of Jabez or the foundering of the ship. Howard Tuttle would know more about that, having been a close friend of Jabez's. Professor Warren, weary, permitted the conversation to drift to Elisha and Eve. He closed his eyes and let the warm sun and the dry, fresh air, lull him into a pleasant doze.

"Miss Eve," Elisha said, "mother has arranged to hold a formal dinner in your honor—and your father's—on next Wednesday. I hope nothing will interfere with your coming."

"How nice of her," Eve said warmly. "Of course I'll come and so will Papa. We do appreciate your kindnesses, Mr. Tuttle."

"Come now," he chided, "call me Elisha. I'm sure we're going to be good friends and, I warn you, at the dance after dinner, I shall do my utmost to claim as many dances as possible. You see, we don't often have so charming and beautiful a visitor to Indian Cove."

She regarded him openly. "Thank you, Elisha. You're very gallant and you have a way with words that could turn a young girl's head."

"I speak only the truth," he replied earnestly.

There was such a look of complete adoration in his face, Eve felt the color rise to her face. He noticed, smiled, and turned to speak to Professor Warren, and noticed for the first time he was sleeping.

"You must forgive Papa," Eve said quietly. "It has been a difficult journey."

"I understand," Elisha said.

"Please tell me about yourself and your family," Eve begged. "I'm very interested. Life here must be so completely different from what I'm accustomed to."

"It is. We're a bit different too, I'm afraid," he said. "In East Machias and even more so in Indian Cove, everyone seems to be either a captain or a mate. All seafarers. Papa never did go to sea, though his brothers did. I would say that Papa was wiser, for he became a banker and his money financed the ships and their cargoes. While the captains made fortunes with their great ships, my father made even more because a hundred ships brought in profits to him. That's why I consider him wiser than most and more successful."

Eve's smile was polite, but she couldn't help but feel Elisha's words boastful.

"My father wasn't greedy, I'm proud to say," he went on. "He put in as much as he took out. He lost a great deal when your uncle's ship ran up on the rocks."

And my Uncle Jabez and his crew lost their lives, Eve thought, but remained quiet about it. She had liked Elisha at first meeting, but was inwardly saddened that her opinion of him was rapidly changing. She hoped Howard Tuttle wouldn't be as smug. She skillfully switched the conversation to more general subjects and found Elisha could be interesting and entertaining when he wasn't bragging about his father's cleverness. They were only about a mile from Indian Cove when Professor Warren wakened. He listened

for a few moments, got the drift of their talk and joined in.

Then the carriage reached the brow of the hill and Eve caught her breath. She looked ahead and saw the road which wound its way down into a level plateau overlooking the Atlantic, stretching into infinity beyond the cliffs.

The village, not much more than a hamlet, was also revealed. There was a cluster of houses, not bearing the white freshness of those in East Machias, for here the wind was cruel in winter and the salt carried by even the slightest breeze turned the white paint into something gray and ugly.

But there was one exception. A very large house, the largest by far, which shone with fresh paint, obviously applied each spring. It was a box-like structure of wood, two stories in height with slender colonnades surrounding the porch which seemed to go completely around the house.

There was a roof railing, ornamented at regular intervals with ornate panels of exquisite design. The house was set in surroundings of stately oaks and elms, with carefully cultivated shrubbery at the front approaches.

It was one of the most charming houses Eve had ever seen and she was entranced with it.

TWO

Howard Tuttle was a tall man, like his son, but much heavier, being given to the jowls indicative of good living. He was hearty, with a loud voice and a compelling manner, and his costume was similar to his son's. It was apparent to Eve that Elisha emulated his father, even to the fringe of side whiskers. Mrs. Tuttle was a graceful, aristocratic-looking woman with somewhat sharp features, but a most pleasant manner. Her full-skirted dress with train rustled softly as she came forward to greet Eve. Her manner was warm and gracious as she placed an arm around Eve's waist and led her into the parlor.

"Delighted to meet you, sir!" Howard Tuttle beamed as he shook hands with Professor Warren. "Ada and I are planning on you staying with us until the castle has been sold. But first of all, I imagine you would like to clean up a bit."

"We would indeed," Professor Warren admitted.

Eve smiled her gratitude as Mrs. Tuttle led her upstairs to a cheery bedroom.

"This is the room we hope you will use, dear," Mrs. Tuttle said. "We've been looking forward to having you and your father with us."

"That's most kind of you, Mrs. Tuttle," Eve replied, "but I'm afraid Papa wants to stay at the

castle. He has to be back at Harvard in September so there isn't much time for him to conduct his business here."

"What a pity," Mrs. Tuttle said regretfully. "However, I understand. I hope though, it won't interfere with the dinner-dance next Wednesday."

"I assure you it won't, and I shall look forward to it with great delight."

Mrs. Tuttle led Eve into a bathroom adjoining the bedroom where there was a pitcher of warm water and soap. Then the older lady excused herself. Eve sighed with delight as she slipped off her dress and poured water into the pitcher.

When she returned downstairs, the pleasing aroma of a home-cooked meal teased her nostrils. Though their arrival had occurred midway between dinner and supper, it was apparent the noonday meal had been delayed for their benefit.

They sat down to a very well prepared dinner of roast beef, potatoes souffle, and Yorkshire pudding with thick, rich gravy. There was a generous salad of vegetables which, Mrs. Tuttle told them, were grown behind the house. Eve felt she couldn't swallow another morsel of food, but when the floating island, so delicate in texture and rich in sauce, was brought in, she weakened.

Coffee and rum were served in Howard Tuttle's study, to which he and Professor Warren finally took refuge from the sprightly conversation between the two women, with Elisha adding a male touch to it.

Howard closed the door, sat down and opened his waistcoat. He sighed in relief. "I always make

a daily resolution each morning while I shave not to eat so much, but I never keep it. Then, what else is there to life except fine eating and the art of making money?"

Perry Warren chuckled. "It's my understanding that you take as much delight in giving it away as in earning it, sir."

Howard seemed very pleased that his reputation for philanthropy had reached as far as Boston. He had no idea they'd even heard of him there.

"Indeed we have, sir," Warren said. "You were most generous in a donation for one of our new residence halls last year."

"Actually," Howard said with a frown, "I'd forgotten that. Well, I try earnestly to do what good I can with my money. It gives me a great deal of pleasure. And now, shall we discuss your castle?"

Warren's smile was wry. "I'm losing hope of ever getting rid of the place."

"It won't be easy, Professor. Much too big for use as a residence. You'll have to depend on some wealthy man to buy it as a summer home, or for a lark."

"You wouldn't consider it yourself, possibly as an investment, Mr. Tuttle?"

"I'm sorry. I wouldn't live there if I were paid for it, and it isn't a good investment. I can tell you quite frankly that my bank wouldn't have loaned a penny on it. Not that Jabez needed a loan —he paid cash on the barrelhead for every stone and every hour of labor that went into building the place. No, I regard it as too dismal for me."

"Then you don't believe I can sell it?"

"My dear sir, I didn't say that. It's possible. Anything is possible, but let me warn you, it won't be easy. However, I shall send out an offer to various banks where I do business. Perhaps we can interest someone in a Scotch castle built along a rocky cliff on the coast of Maine."

Professor Warren took a sip of the fine rum, drank some coffee to follow it up, and felt relaxed and easy of mind.

"Is the place habitable?" he asked.

"At this season of the year, yes. How in the world Jabez ever expected to heat the castle in winter, I don't know. Most of the rooms have enormous fireplaces, but it would require an army of men constantly felling trees, cutting them up and hauling them to the castle to keep all those grates hot."

The Professor stuffed a pipe, lit it, and unburdened himself of a few facts he believed Howard Tuttle should know.

"I'm not a rich man. College professors are not well paid, as you probably know. This castle is my entire inheritance from Jabez. It originally cost almost half a million dollars, and certainly there must be some sort of chance of getting rid of it. Frankly, I need the money. Therefore, I intend to go to the castle, live in it temporarily, clean it up, do all I can to make it presentable. Meanwhile, I'm going to advertise it in Boston, New York, Portland, Philadelphia and Washington newspapers. Then all I can do is hope someone rises to the bait."

"There'd be no other sensible way of handling

it, Professor. At that, you might enjoy the old place for a while. Not everyone can say he owned and lived in a castle. Especially an American castle."

"They tell me it's haunted," Warren said with a chuckle.

"Well, all such places have their legends. This one, of course, is so new that it couldn't harbor a ghost except that Elizabeth died there. I doubt very much she was the type of person who'd come back to haunt the premises."

"And what of the *Elizabeth B?*"

Howard wagged his head so that his jowls flopped loosely from side to side. "A pity, that. I had an interest in her too, you know. Total loss. No, sir . . . that old hulk isn't worth a copper. She lies on the reef beyond the shore. Oddly, it's opposite the castle so that when Jabez went down, he must have seen the place. Oh no . . . I'm being gruesomely romantic, I'm afraid. The ship foundered at night. During a wild storm. Jabez wouldn't have been able to see a foot in front of his nose."

"Have no bodies ever been found? I ask because I understand it happened so close to shore . . ."

"It could have happened on the beach. That storm was one of the most severe we've ever had around here. The bodies were washed out to sea. The whole ship was so engulfed by water that lifeboats, everything on deck, went overside. Sails were ripped off, the masts came down. If the ship hadn't jammed itself upon the reef, it would have vanished in the wildness of that night, sir."

Warren sighed. "Poor Jabez, he loved a hard

task mistress. Yet he did get rich. In a way, that is. He spent it all on this crazy castle."

"Not so crazy," Howard commented mildly. "It was for Elizabeth and it gave her happiness even if only for a short time."

"Yes . . ." Warren nodded. "Yes, you're right. But I have his problem now—the castle."

"It won't be too much of a problem living there unless you have to stay into winter, Professor. You'll be in real trouble then. Here, in this house of mine, we're snug. Now you take that little stove of mine—the Gothic stove."

Warren looked at the squat, ornately grilled little stove from which a black stovepipe led into a chimney. Its open grillwork contained the grate, and there was a removable grilled top down in which fuel could be poured. Warren had seen only a very few of these stoves before.

"Uses coal—compact fuel," Howard explained. "Makes a very hot and lasting fire. You can use a Gothic stove in a room like this and get maximum benefit from it. Easy to take care of, provides as much heat as a roaring fireplace. But up at the castle one of these would do about as much good as lighting a sulphur match."

"As I said before," Warren reminded him, "we can seal off two or three rooms."

"You haven't seen the place. Wait . . . you'll know what I mean then. The first floor rooms have ceilings three times as high as this room. All that air has to be heated. They're three, sometimes five times as big as this. The walls are of granite. Rock retains cold, spreads it, resists heat. That was your brother's mistake. A great castle with no efficient

way to heat it in a climate where heat is a matter of life and death."

"We'll make do," Warren insisted stubbornly. "And now I must intrude on your hospitality, Mr. Tuttle. If Eve and I are to see this place by daylight and accustom ourselves to moving about in the castle, we'd best go now. I ask only that you loan us a carriage."

"A rig was ordered harnessed half an hour ago, and you may use it indefinitely, Professor. I think it very wise of you to wish to arrive there in daylight. It's been a pleasure we must repeat—having you and your charming daughter as our guests."

Eve was more than ready to leave, even though by this time she had come to know Elisha better and his conversation both interested and stimulated her. Also, his mother's presence seemed to gentle him somehow, and that was understandable for Eve was captivated by Mrs. Tuttle's charm.

"I'll ride over tomorrow," Elisha promised Eve as they were leaving.

His parents stood on the porch while he escorted Eve and her father to the drive in front of the house where a rig was waiting. Their baggage had already been transferred to it, and Professor Warren got aboard while Elisha helped Eve up onto the seat.

They drove off, both excited and pleased with their adventure so far. Eve waved back at the Tuttles, standing on the porch, then turned and kept her eyes straight ahead as if she wanted to be the first to glimpse the spires of the castle. She

wished she'd read up on castles before they left Boston.

"Well, how did you like the Tuttles?" her father asked.

"I think they're wonderful people, Papa, don't you?"

"Oh yes . . . remarkable people, I might say. Very democratic. You'd hardly realize Howard Tuttle is so wealthy a man that he gives away five times as much as I earn in a year."

"Elisha is certainly a second Howard Tuttle," Eve said, her voice amused as she thought of the way the son walked like the father, talked like him and thought like him.

"I noticed that too, but I wouldn't call it an unadmirable trait, my dear. One thing about Mr. Tuttle I don't care for, however. He seeks all the publicity he can get whenever he gives away a large sum. That is—he attends banquets in his honor, makes speeches, unveils cornerstones . . . all that. He seems to enjoy getting a maximum of renown for his good work. It wouldn't surprise me if he was thinking of running for office. Senator, perhaps."

It was an unimportant subject to Eve. She was already catching glimpses of the sea, which heightened her excitement, and she could hear the pounding of the surf intermittently, even thought it was a calm day. She wondered what the sound would be like during a storm—the kind that had killed her uncle and his entire crew.

They had just topped a ridge, and looking down from it, she could see the several acres of lush grass, the cleared area, now grown in, but

still looking somewhat like a vast garden of green, interspersed with the yellows of marigolds and nasturtiums, the pale hue of the pinks and the ragged-ladies, the sheer white, yellow-centered daisies. Jabez seemed to have sprinkled flower seeds indiscriminately about the estate. It wasn't until much later that Eve realized this had once been a formal garden and the flowers had sprinkled their own seeds wildly after Jabez had died.

Her eyes lifted to see the castle for the first time. She'd deliberately avoided looking at it intently from a distance. She wanted it in closeup before she gave it all of her attention and now they were near enough.

The building actually frightened her with its enormity. Just as in the illustrations that accompanied the tales of King Arthur, she could visualize knights in armor riding out of the castle to do battle. She could, in her mind's eye, see the fair maidens at the parapets or in the high windows, waving sadly.

There was no moat, but her disappointment at that lack was quickly forgotten in her absorption with the castle. The outside was of thick gray granite slabs rising in sheer walls to the somewhat set-back second floor. Here were the parapets, the battlements flanked with towers, and the roof-top studded with chimneys, the number of which gave some idea of the many rooms this building must contain.

At the rear, which faced the point, the cliff and the sea, was the tallest of the towers, and this seemed to be glassed in, somewhat like a light-

house. The sun was reflected brilliantly on the glass, giving it the appearance of a daytime beacon.

The whole thing was as incongruous as a New York or Boston brownstone set in the middle of the Sahara Desert, but to Eve it seemed exactly right for the setting. A strong building for a rugged area.

Her father brought the horse up sharply and emitted a loud whistle of actual astonishment. "Good heavens, what a place," he said.

"Isn't it wonderful?" Eve agreed enthusiastically, and her eyes were alive and very bright with excitement. "Imagine Uncle Jabez building something like this for the girl he loved, just so she wouldn't be homesick?"

"No," her father said, "I can't imagine it. Not knowing my brother the way I did. I'd have sworn there wasn't a sentimental thought in the man, except for the love of his ships. But here's proof of the hugeness of his heart."

"I'm going to love it here," Eve said. "I know I am. Oh, let's postpone going into the house and just drive to the edge of the cliff and look out over the sea."

"A good idea." Her father slapped the reins and the horse moved agilely off the road and across the green, level ground almost to the very edge of the cliff.

Now they had an awesome sight of the rock-ribbed coastline which formed the Grand Manan Channel. The surf, clawed by the rocks well out to sea, came crashing in with enormous quan-

tities of white foam and a spray that assumed rainbow colors in the slanting rays of the afternoon sun.

They both saw this and it delighted them, but they also saw the hulk which lay a quarter mile offshore. The hulk of the *Elizabeth B*, tilted at a crazy angle and looking as if it would slide into the sea at any moment, though Professor Warren had been told it would not. The hulk was firmly hung up and would likely stay on the rocks until it disintegrated.

She'd been a large ship, a clipper of 960 gross tons and an overall length of more than 212 feet. Her tall masts were broken, reduced to shattered stumps of their former gracefulness. The hull was blackened from exposure and barnacle encrusted.

"I'm not much of a sailor," Eve said, "but the ship looks to me as if she'd float, once off those rocks."

Warren smiled. "I thought of that long ago, but she's been written off as a total loss. Stove in, useless, just a wreck."

"But Papa, isn't it strange that none of her crew was able to get ashore? I could swim out there easily, even in rough water."

"Not the kind they get there, my dear child. This isn't like Boston. I've no doubt but that you'll witness an exhibition of what the sea can do here, before we return home. Now, shall we go inside and inspect our castle?"

Eve nodded and happily linked her arm under his. They walked, leading the horse and rig, letting their feet appreciate the softness of the grass while they breathed deeply of the vague per-

fume of the flowers mingled with the tangy sea air they both loved.

Warren produced an enormous key and laughed as he held it up. "Jabez missed nothing, apparently, for even the locks were duplicated. Ah, I see one modern touch—a very nice barn at the side of the castle. Would you like to go in while I unhitch and water the horse?"

"I'm not afraid, if that's what you mean," Eve said and reached for the proffered key. "Honestly, Papa, I think I could learn to love this castle."

"Now, now," her father cautioned, "don't start talking that way. We can't afford it, even if we do own it right down to the smallest stone. Besides, Mr. Tuttle gave me an idea of what it's like here in the winter."

"We could use it summers," Eve said, but her father shook his head and Eve knew it was hopeless. However, she could enjoy the place for a while, at least. She walked eagerly to the great double doors and wondered how in the world she'd manage to swing even one of them open, but then she saw there was a smaller door inserted in the larger one.

This opened easily and a draft of cold, chill air came out to greet her and then seemed to eagerly flow past her to reach the sunlight.

She stepped into the entrance hall, an enormous, high-ceilinged room with granite walls but, fortunately, a floor of wide wooden planks, smoothed until the boards appeared to blend into one solid floor, unmarred by cracks.

Her heels made loud clicking sounds in the echoing silences of the hall. She stood, regarding

the staircase—a gigantic one that curved gracefully and ended in a spacious landing that overlooked the entrance hall.

The windows were boraded, the furniture covered with muslin, and even the paintings draped. The only light entered the castle through generous chinks in the window boards, and the chill seemed to have been there since last winter.

Flanking the central staircase were two vast fireplaces. Smoke had colored the granite above them. Off the entrance hall, a door caught Eve's attention. She opened it and entered what was probably a drawing room, though Eve, standing in amazement as she regarded its size, felt sure it could easily be called a ballroom.

This was certainly no place for ordinary people. It resembled a museum, like those in Boston, built to accommodate a hundred, three hundred people at one time.

The large, carefully-covered object had to be a piano. Beside it was another object, similarly covered. Eve was intrigued enough to walk up to it and lift a corner of the cover. Beneath it was a large harp. When she dropped the cover, it gently caressed one of the strings and brought forth a low humming sound that the vastness of the room picked up and intensified.

Almost at the same moment, she heard footsteps. Without turning around, she called out, "Papa, what in the world are we going to do with a place like this?"

There was no answer. She looked around, frightened for a moment. She was alone in the room. "Papa!" she called loudly. The word

echoed and re-echoed and seemed to have escaped into the entrance hall to be amplified there.

The chill that went through her froze her to the spot as she listened intently for a repetition of the sound from upstairs, while every nerve went taut and she wanted to close her ears tightly for fear something or someone might step into that room, with the intent of driving her out.

"Eve?" It was her father's voice. "Eve . . ."

"In here," she called out, relief flooding through her. "In here, Papa."

He came striding across the room, letting his gaze drift from walls to ceiling and back again.

"I've never seen such a place in my life."

"Papa, did you just come into the house?"

"Yes . . . why, yes . . ." Concern edged his voice as he noticed her paleness. "What is it, my dear?"

"Sounds . . . upstairs . . . someone . . ."

"Well," Warren took a long breath, "let's go see."

He walked with her to the entrance hall. "Eve, perhaps you'd best stay here."

"No," she said promptly. "I want to be with you."

He nodded. "All right."

They walked up the stairway slowly. Twice Warren and Eve paused to listen, but there were no further sounds. They reached the second floor landing and looked down a long corridor to the left, a shorter one to the right. There were, perhaps, a dozen rooms off each. All doors seemed to be closed.

"This is a hotel," Warren said. "Eve . . . the sound, what was it like?"

"Someone . . . footsteps . . . I'm sure, Papa."

"Anybody here?" Warren raised his voice to a shout. "Speak up, is anyone here?"

A vast silence answered him. He made a helpless motion with his hands and began walking down the corridor to the right, opening each door as he progressed.

These were bedrooms, of perhaps slightly more than average size. Each room was exactly the same. Square, with medium height ceilings, two high, narrow windows. The furnishings were different in each, but all were heavy pieces, of dark wood, probably the sort used in such a castle in Scotland. If Jabez had duplicated the castle, it was understandable that he would also duplicate the furniture as well. They examined the other corridor with the same results.

They found a narrower, steeper stairway at the end of this hallway. Warren climbed the steps with Eve behind him. He didn't care much for this place and he thought that Jabez must have gone stark mad to build it, let alone live in it. This was summer, warm even for Northern Maine, but the castle possessed a chill that seemed to have been compressed into its stones and would last forever.

Eve remembered one tall, predominating tower at the west end of the castle, reaching up higher than the rest of the structure and, in all probability, it was to this tower that the stairway led.

There was a closed door at the top which Warren threw open suddenly, as if he expected to

surprise someone. No one was there, but it was a room altogether different from any in the rest of the house. Round, completely windowed, except for two french doors which opened onto a balcony. The windows, unboarded, presented a sweeping view of the sea.

This had undoubtedly been a room Jabez reserved for himself, something apart from the Scottish castle he had built and furnished for his wife. It was filled with books on navigation, with maps, ships' models probably carved during long, lonely voyages. There were leather-covered chairs, worn but comfortable looking. There was also a desk, and in front of the french doors which overlooked the sea stood a brass telescope on a brass tripod which had been fastened to the floor.

"I'd almost expect to see Jabez sitting in one of those chairs," Warren told his daughter. "The whole room is Jabez."

"Papa," Eve said in a small voice, "this castle has been closed up for more than two years. Downstairs, and on the second floor, everything is dust-covered, but this room . . . it looks as if it was cleaned twice a day."

Warren peered around, ran his fingers over the large teakwood desk. The skin collected no dust and the surface felt smooth, not gritty as it would have if no one had been here in many months.

"It's true, my dear. Strange too, because no one is supposed to have been here."

Eve stepped to the telescope. It was slanted down toward the sea. She opened the french doors and then, without touching the telescope, stepped behind it and looked through the lenses.

The telescope was trained precisely on the wreck of the *Elizabeth B*, hung up on the rocks. She didn't want her father to see that. He had enough on his mind, knowing she'd already been frightened. Perhaps it meant nothing. The telescope had to be trained on something.

She gave the 'scope a hard tap and its larger end tilted up toward the ceiling.

Her father was still regarding the room. He sat down at the desk and opened the drawers at random. Some contained yellowed papers. He glanced up at Eve.

"Where did you think the sound came from? The footsteps?"

"Up here," she said slowly. "I don't know why I say that, but I think they came from this room."

Warren reached down and rapped his knuckles against the well-polished floor.

"I'm quite in agreement, Eve. The lower floors are built on a rock or cement base. This floor is only of wood. Sound would carry from it rather than from those below. If you heard steps, they must have come from this room."

She felt that sudden chill again and she quickly closed the french doors.

THREE

Later, while removing their baggage from the rig, they discovered more of the Tuttle generosity. There was a large hamper filled with food which included an enormous jar labeled clam chowder. Also, there were two live lobsters packed in ice and straw, biscuits to warm in the oven and a blueberry pie.

"At least," her father commented wryly, "we won't starve in our castle. Frankly, I never gave a thought to bringing any food."

"Nor I," Eve confessed with a smile. "And now that I think of food, I'd better see what the kitchen looks like. I presume castles have kitchens."

Through the gloom, Eve could see an archway beneath the stairs which attracted her. She and her father went through it, moved cautiously along a dark corridor and finally entered a large room. Professor Warren found the door to the outside and opened it, flooding the kitchen with outdoor light.

Eve exclaimed happily as she surveyed the room. A dozen cooks could operate here without being in one another's way. There was a large working counter, a sink with a pump that apparently fed right into a well built under the castle. The stove was an enormous wood-burning monstrosity, in need of blackening and polish,

but otherwise in good condition. There was even cordwood stacked to the capacity of the large woodbox.

The pantry didn't have anything in the way of supplies, but there was an empty flour barrel, a sugar barrel just as vacant, a firkin in which some brown sugar had been reduced to a hard mass. On a sturdy shelf were lined gray stoneware jugs, decorated with a blue design. There was a shelf of heavy whiteware dishes for everyday use and another of blue Staffordshire for best. Very likely Jabez's new bride had brought these from Scotland.

The usual pots and pans hung from hooks and nails, but they showed no signs of having been used in many months. Eve returned to the kitchen where her father was examining the stove.

"If we're going to be here long," she said, "there's an enormous amount of work to be done, Papa."

He looked up and nodded. "I can see that. We'll have to do our best to make the place as presentable as possible in case we have to show it to prospective buyers. The first thing to do is remove the window boards, and I'll get right at it. I found some tools in a chest alongside the door."

Eve shook her head as she looked around the kitchen, "Papa, why anyone would be tempted to buy this castle is beyond me. I think Jabez left you a white elephant that you'll never get rid of."

"Perhaps . . . perhaps. Time will determine that. Meanwhile, we'd better pick out our bedrooms and see if we can find linen and blankets. I

have an idea this will be a cold place during the night, even in August."

"I'll select the bedrooms, Papa, so please come upstairs and unboard those windows first."

There was a candlestick on a shelf over the sink with a fat candle embedded in it. Eve took it to help her in her search for the linens—if there were any.

Upstairs, she selected two bedrooms in the larger wing. They were directly opposite one another and since her father liked quiet, she chose the one facing the water. She'd always loved the sea, even since she was a little girl, when her happiest hours were spent playing on the beaches near Boston. So she could understand her Uncle Jabez's love for it.

The professor went to work unboarding the windows while Eve, with lighted candle, opened doors in the corridor, seeking out the linen closet. She finally found it, at one end of the corridor. It was stacked high with linens and blankets, all carefully wrapped to keep out dust and decay. There was also a broom, which brought a smile to her face. She set the candle on a shelf, filled her arms with bedding and picked up the broom. Then she blew out the flame of the candle and left the closet.

Her father had apparently returned to the kitchen and, with work to be done, she became too busy to dwell on what it would be like here at night, after the last candle was snuffed out. She cleaned both rooms, made up her father's first, then carried the remainder of the bedclothes to her room. The windows now let in the remaining day-

light and she passed in front of one of them, entranced with the view. She could see the whole outline of the peninsula at the end of which was this castle.

On either side, the sea rolled onto rocky shores, often with a crash of waves. There appeared to be a sandbar from this peninsula to the one across the inlet and it seemed to be quite close, though Eve knew it was more than likely half a mile or more from shore to shore. She made the bed, dusted, then leaned against the stone ledge below the window and watched the lobstermen coming in, riding their one-masted, two-jibbed flukes expertly. A herring boat, two-masted and much larger, plowed its way through the sea some distance out. It was not heading for shore, probably because her fish boxes were not yet filled.

The rays of the afternoon sun were slanted now so that they touched the peninsula and gave the rocks and the land a pinkish glow that the field daisies picked up and became drenched with.

A cloud of gulls came out of nowhere to swoop down in the wake of one lobsterman's fluke. He must have been throwing over old bait and dead fish caught in the traps. She could hear the gulls fight noisily for each scrap before it sank.

She turned away reluctantly, for there was still work to be done, but she thought again of the tower and wondered at the spotlessness of it. She wondered if it was possible that someone lived in the castle, but used the room exclusively. That would account for its cleanliness, and if there was an intruder, he'd have little trouble keeping out of sight.

Eve gave up thinking about it and unpacked her luggage which her father had brought up. As it was, she had to return to the closet and get the candlestick so as to light her way along the corridor and down the stairs. The narrow windows brought dusk to the interior of this house with a startling speed.

She smelled the chowder as she walked through the archway to the kitchen and the tang of it whetted her appetite, despite the large dinner she'd eaten at the Tuttles'.

In the kitchen her father had heated the chowder and the biscuits after making a roaring fire in the stove. The windows were unboarded to let in the remaining daylight, the table was set with a bright red and white checkered cloth and some heavy, fine silver graced each table setting. Being a practical-minded man, he was using the heavy whiteware dishes, but a beautiful crystal candelabra graced the center of the table, giving the meal a holiday air.

"Just in time for supper," he said with a degree of pride. "Sit down, my dear, and let's enjoy it. This New England clam chowder is the best I've ever tasted."

He ladled the rich mixture into their plates, served the biscuits from the oven, and they ate with a surprising gusto, the meal spiced with much talk. Mainly of castles and possible buyers of same. After a while, Warren lit more candles until the kitchen sparkled with their yellow light and they felt snug and comfortable.

"Are you sorry you came?" he asked his daughter.

"Oh, Papa, of course I'm not. Maybe we won't even sell the place, but live in it ourselves. I could think of worse things."

Professor Warren laughed. "Tell me that again after the snow flies. When the woodboxes are empty and the fireplaces cold. No—without a retinue of servants to take care of the castle and those who live in it, this place is out of the question. However, we may have a pleasant month or two here before it gets too cold to be bearable. I noticed Elisha Tuttle watching you every moment. There's a lad knows a pretty girl when he sees one."

She felt the pink rising up along her throat, but she managed to laugh at the insinuation. "Papa, I hardly know him. I will say he was very gentlemanly and polite, though, and I liked his father and mother."

"So did I. They're well-to-do, of course, and they're quite lavish with their charity donations. There are few charity balls they don't attend and even fewer appeals for help which they reject. I suppose you might call them society people and Mr. Tuttle is most certainly a philanthropist."

"Well, Papa," Eve observed, "no one is going to do these dishes out of charity, so let's get them done and then go out and look at the sea from the cliff's edge again."

There was a large copper kettle of water already hot, and it took them only minutes to do the dishes and put the kitchen in order. Their appetites were sated by the rich chowder and the biscuits, along with the coffee and pie.

The early evening breezes were cool, but pleas-

ant, and a light sweater was sufficient. They walked briskly to the edge of the cliff where there was a curved bench of cement. Here they could sit and watch the darkness touch the horizon and finally obliterate it.

The only grimness their eyes could see was the barnacled wreck of the *Elizabeth B*, held fast by the rocks and still not breaking up, a tribute to her Scotch builders. In the dusk, she sometimes looked as if she were actually sailing and nothing had happened to her.

"I can't, for the life of me," Warren said, "imagine why Jabez was sailing so close to shore. The ship is big, needs deep water, and there's no harbor close by to handle her. It wasn't as if he wanted to sail her past the castle so that Elizabeth could see the ship which had been named after her. Elizabeth had been dead almost a year before the wreck."

"Isn't it strange, Papa, how nobody was saved? Why I could easily swim out to the wreck, even if the water is rough."

Warren smiled and shook his head. "You've never seen one of these northern Maine storms. They're as wild as a hurricane and they continue for hours. Well, there goes the last of the daylight. We'd better go back before we get lost."

Eve stood up and studied the castle behind them. "As if we could, with that guiding us. You know, Papa, Jabez must have loved Elizabeth dearly to have built this—just to please her."

"Yes, he loved her. He always used to say there was one woman somewhere in the world for him and when he found her, he'd know it—and

so would she, for he'd pay court to her as no man had ever done before. So he found her and built her this castle merely to make her feel at home. Personally, I wish he'd fallen in love with a girl who liked a pretty little cottage which an heir might sell at a good price and not have to scour the earth for a buyer."

They walked slowly back to the castle, each drinking in the beauty of the night. A full moon glittered on the sea and played hide-and-seek among the clouds which drifted lazily along the horizon. But the pleasant breeze of the day had grown chill.

When Eve's father opened the door for her, she hesitated a scant second and her breath caught in her throat. She knew she didn't want to go in. There was nothing inside to frighten her, yet the coldness of the interior, the still boarded-up windows, the loneliness and vastness of the place sent an eerie feeling through her and she wished she were back in Boston.

Moonlight silvered her face as she looked up at her father, who was regarding her anxiously.

"We can still go back to the Tuttles'," he said kindly.

"No, Papa," Eve forced a smile, "I'm all right. It just felt strange for a moment, coming in here."

"It is gloomy," Warren agreed. "We'll have to remember to leave candelabras beside the door so we'll be able to light our way when we come in."

"There are two on the table in the center of the hall," Eve said, moving toward it.

Her father struck a match and lit them. Then

he closed the door. Again that eerie feeling possessed her, but she picked up a candelabra and went into the large sitting room or parlor—she wondered just what her Aunt Elizabeth had called it. Her father followed, carrying the second candlestick.

But the room, with its dust-covered furniture and stuffy odor, was cold and uninviting. They returned to the kitchen and the welcoming candlelight relaxed Eve and lifted her spirits. They were both exhausted from the long train journey anyway, and when Warren suggested they retire, she agreed, even though the prospects of spending the night alone in one of those rooms didn't appeal to her.

Then Warren made another pleasant discovery. Opening a cabinet, he found several lanterns and lamps which burned whale oil. Apparently, Jabez, the seafaring man, while keeping a supply of candles on hand, had little use for them. Warren had found ample evidence of that in the large supply of them he'd found in a drawer in the pantry. Undoubtedly there would also be a supply of oil on the premises, but fortunately the lamps held a sufficient supply for the night.

He lit four of them, then blew out the candles. He led the way to the second floor and each of them carried two lamps. As they moved down the corridor, Eve found herself listening for footsteps, like those she'd heard the first time she entered the castle. She believed her father was right—that they'd come from the tower room. It was the only room that had been clean and it had the feeling of being used. However, the only sounds

were their own footsteps echoing hollowly along the corridors. Unlike ancient wooden houses, this building possessed nothing to squeak and squeal, but drafts of air seemed to sweep through to touch her arms and move her skirts, then make gentle sighing noises as they passed on.

"You'll be all right," her father assured her as he opened her bedroom door. "I'll be across the hall. Just call out if you're frightened."

"Oh, Papa, I'm twenty years old. What's there to be frightened of? Don't worry about me."

"Good night then," he said and bent to kiss her brow lightly. "Rest well. Tomorrow you can make up a list of supplies we'll need. We'll have to drive the rig to town soon for them."

"We won't be foolish about buying too much food," Eve said. "There's a beach down there that I'll bet is full of clams, and there must be fishermen about who'll sell us fresh lobster and maybe some scrod. This is where the best sea food in the world comes from. I want to enjoy some of it."

"So do I. We'll have our share of it and see if you can coax the recipe for clam chowder out of Mrs. Tuttle."

"I will, Papa," Eve said, her smile cheerful. "Good night."

FOUR

Eve set one whale oil lamp on the bureau, the other on the table by her bedside. They gave far more light than candles and were steadier. She was very grateful for them.

The bedroom she had chosen looked considerably improved since she cleaned it. The two rockers, one at each window, reflected the light from the lamps; there was an armoire in one corner in which were china figurines. It lent a cheery atmosphere to the room, which was otherwise austere. However, there was a fireplace, and Eve wished mightily it was alit with logs. Another table, in an alcove, held a pitcher and bowl. Her father had thoughtfully filled it with water that afternoon, and Eve smiled gratefully as she undressed and poured water into the bowl.

She bathed her body, ridding it of the last vestiges of coal dust. In the morning, she planned to heat enough water to fill the tub in the bathroom and soak in it lazily. For now, she was eager to slip between the bedclothes and sink into the softness and warmth of the feather mattress, for she felt thoroughly chilled.

She put on a flannel nightdress, blew out the lamp on the bureau and got into bed. She curled up in a ball and thought of the days ahead and what they would bring. There were the Tuttles,

whom she already liked. There was the dinner and dance they were giving. She'd undoubtedly meet many interesting people, and the thought of it excited her. She wondered if there'd been guests in the castle when her Aunt Elizabeth lived here. Probably. In that case, Eve would see to it there were guests here again. Once they got the rooms cleaned and aired, it would be a delight to have it ring with the laughter and gaiety of people. Eve thought with amusement that they could certainly give dances in about any room on the first floor.

Her thoughts drifted to Elisha. Of his good looks, his charm and—a sad sigh escaped her—his boastfulness. Perhaps he'd been trying to make an impression. She'd met a few young men who, even though wealthy, were unsure of themselves and possessed that trait. It could be overcome and, for Elisha's sake, Eve hoped he would change. She liked him.

Thoroughly warmed, she stretched out and settled down for sleep, but when she went to blow out the lamp, she hesitated. The thought of lying here in the darkness made her uneasy again. It wasn't fear, she told herself firmly, just a strange environment and a lonely one, and it was inclined to make her a bit nervous.

So she lay there for half an hour, closing her eyes for only a few seconds at a time. She found herself listening for creaks, or sounds of someone moving about, but she might as well have been in a tomb, for not a sound reached her. Not even the sea. She sat up quickly and laughed, chiding herself for forgetting to open a window.

She arose, glad of the opportunity to be on her

feet again. She padded across the cold floor to one of the windows. It was released by a catch, opened inward and hooked in place on the sill. She breathed deeply of the brisk air which flowed into the room and glanced out over the sea. The moon now made a silver carpet on the water, and the waves which had pounded the rocks on the incoming tide that afternoon were making rolling sounds.

She squinted slightly and peered out into the semidarkness because something had attracted her attention. The moonlight appeared to be reflecting in a strange manner at the point where the wreck of the schooner lay. There were small blue lights and they seemed to be moving while suspended well above the deck. Eve thought it must be an optical illusion because lights don't move about in thin air.

Still, she could see them plainly enough. Something like giant fireflies bobbing about, only the light was definitely blue. She felt cold prickles of fear along her spine. She wanted to turn away, but she was too intrigued and too frightened. The lights almost seemed to be alive, flitting about crazily.

Or was someone on board the ship? Someone carrying a lamp, and his movements made it seem as if there were many lamps? But then, who could it be and what would anyone be doing on a schooner which had been a wreck for almost three years? And prowling the wreck at night! If only she could see a little better. . . .

She remembered the brass telescope in the tower room. That might enable her to see what

caused those lights; the 'scope was a fine one, capable of enlarging distant images many, many times.

But to use the telescope would require a long walk down the corridor, up the narrow stairs and into the tower room where nobody was supposed to have been for months and which was, nevertheless, carefully dusted and cleaned.

She walked back to the bed, put on her woolen dressing gown and held it around her. She stepped into slippers, picked up the lamp and moved into the corridor. The lamp threw wild shadows that danced madly over the walls and along the floor.

She stood outside her father's room and raised her hand to knock on the door, but then hesitated. What was the matter with her? Some blue lights out at the wreck? There was probably a logical explanation for them. Her father had put in a hard day and he was fatigued from traveling. He was no longer a young man, he needed sleep and it would be cruel to awaken him at this hour.

She was twenty. A modern, intelligent young woman not given to foolish terrors. There was no one in this huge castle, there was nothing to fear. There was an explanation as to why the tower room had been kept so clean and tidy . . . the Tuttles probably guessed they might be intrigued by it and want to use it and therefore had brought along a servant to give the room a thorough cleaning. Of course that was the answer.

She walked resolutely down the corridor between the rows of closed doors and she resolved that in the morning she'd open every one of them

and leave them open. The rooms needed a good airing anyway.

She held the lamp high when she reached the foot of the narrow staircase to the tower room, but the light didn't reach to the top. She lowered the lamp and went up the stairs slowly, stopping to listen after each few steps. Then the light touched the closed door and she felt more secure.

She opened the door and stepped into the room. It was softly illuminated by moonlight, almost well enough so that she didn't require the lamp, but it was reassuring. She placed the lamp on the desk. Strangely, she felt no fear here. Somehow, the room seemed more like a sanctuary, and it made her Uncle Jabez seem real—more real than when he was alive. Her Uncle Jabez whom she had never seen in her life, but whose exotic little gifts, sent from all over the world, excited her each time they arrived and made her conjure up mental pictures of what he was like. He rarely forgot her on any of his long voyages and usually she received several presents, some of which took months to reach her.

She'd written him little letters of appreciation, but she didn't even know if he got all of them, being on the move as he always was. Now this was his room, though she fully believed he undoubtedly had happily shared it with his bride. Certainly Jabez hadn't been a selfish man. This splendid structure he'd had built as a tribute to his wife was proof of that.

She passed a hand over the well-worn leather chair. There was a hollow in it, created by his

body. Startled, her hand paused and pressed a little harder. The leather seemed warm to the touch, as if someone had been sitting here only a few moments ago.

She told herself she was being silly. There was but one way out of this room—down the stairway she'd come up—and no one had passed her. She refused to be frightened. Besides, there was the matter of the strange blue lights over the wreck which had brought her up here in the first place, and she was determined to find out what they were. She walked toward the telescope, but stopped abruptly before she reached it and eyed it carefully. She recalled very distinctly that she'd left the telescope tilted upwards toward the ceiling. Now it was trained on the sea again.

She felt the fear coming back, then shrugged it off. Perhaps the telescope was top-heavy and had settled down under its own weight. She was about to test it to see if the fittings were loose, but she hesitated a moment and then, without laying a finger on it, she squinted through the glass.

The telescope was trained directly on the wreck, but the strange blue lights were not there any longer. All she could see was the ugly form of a dead ship. Then the moon disappeared behind a thick cloud formation and she could no longer even see the wreck.

She stepped back, touched the telescope. It didn't move. She tried tilting it and, as she had recalled, it took a moderate amount of pressure to move it. Someone had been in this room moments before and used the scope to view the wreck. It

couldn't have been her father, for he was exhausted and wanted nothing more than sleep.

She thought the sea was growing a bit more choppy. Certainly noisier, and a wind seemed to have come up suddenly. Then the french doors in front of the telescope banged open and the wind swept into the room, billowing out the curtains on the other windows. It was so strong it took Eve's breath away and she turned her back on it. Just as she did, the lamp was blown out.

All this had built up rapidly, climaxed with Eve being unexpectedly plunged into darkness. She screamed. She couldn't help it. Fear had finally overpowered her. She kept on screaming, for she had no match to relight the lamp and the darkness seemed to billow in on her.

She had to get out of the tower room. She moved jerkily to the stairway door, feeling more than seeing her way, opened it and stumbled down the steps, her screams now reverberating through the corridors. She slipped once, but regained her balance, thanks to the narrowness of the stairway.

At the bottom, her screams changed to sobs as she ran down the long, dismally dark expanse of corridor. She lost one slipper, but wasn't even aware of it. She saw the stairway to the entrance hall and was able to orient herself. She ran to her father's room, banged on the door with both hands and called to him, over and over, imploring him to come and help her.

After what was only a few moments, but seemed hours to Eve, the door flew open and

Warren held a lamp high. The light seemed to cover and shelter her, but she went into her father's arms and sobbed bitterly against his chest.

"What is it, child?" he asked. "What in the world is wrong?"

"I . . . don't know. I saw some strange blue lights . . . above the ship . . ."

"The wreck?" he asked with a deep frown.

"Yes . . . I don't know what they were, but I wanted to find out so I went upstairs to the tower room."

"You should have awakened me, Eve."

"I wasn't frightened then. Just curious. In the tower room . . . I had my lamp with me . . . it seemed to me that someone had just left. One of the chairs . . . the black leather one . . . I thought it was warm . . . as if someone had been sitting in it . . . Then there was the telescope. . . ."

"What about it?"

"Papa, do you remember that I tilted it upwards as far as it would go?"

"Why—yes. I remember that."

"Did you touch it since then?"

"Of course not."

"Someone did. It was tilted back and trained directly on the wreck."

"That's strange." His frown grew even deeper.

"And then . . . then a wind came up and the french doors blew open and my lamp blew out and I guess . . . I guess I lost my head. I was so scared all I could do was scream and scream and scream."

"I'd better go up and have a look," Warren said. "But first, I'll see you safely in bed."

"No, Papa, I want to be with you. I'm scared."

"Very well," he said tolerantly. "Come along then."

He passed his arm about her slim waist to give her more confidence and it worked because her fears dwindled rapidly. Warren hadn't shown a twinge of fear, merely wishing to solve the mystery. Eve found her slipper along the way and put it on.

She followed her father up the stairs. The door stood open, just as she'd left it, and so did the french doors. Warren closed them against the wind and shot the bolt. Then he stepped behind the 'scope and peered through it.

"You're dead right," he admitted. "It's trained on the wreck. I don't see those blue lights you were talking about, though."

"They disappeared before I looked through the telescope," she said. "Papa, could the telescope have moved by itself?"

Warren checked it and shook his head. "No—it's quite tight."

He began to examine the windows. Except for the french doors, every one was stoutly locked. Outside was a small balcony, but otherwise there seemed to be nothing but blank wall.

"There's no way anyone could have entered this room, Eve. I can't explain what happened, but I don't think you should remain here after tonight. We'll take advantage of the Tuttles' kind invitation to stay with them. This is not a fit place

for a girl. It's lonely—and yes—ghostly. I can't have you frightened like this."

Eve looked chagrined. "Papa, I behaved like a baby. I'm sorry. Nothing but the wind frightened me. That was the ghost—the wind." She managed a smile. "Certainly there is nothing in a strong breeze to do me harm. My imagination got the better of me. The french doors weren't bolted and they flew open. The clouds covered the moon and made it as black as pitch, but everything can be explained logically. Please let me stay here. I want to be with you."

He smiled at her. "You're sure now? I don't want you frightened again."

"Papa, I'm positive. Now we have this whole place to clean up and explore, and perhaps someone will answer your advertisements and come here and see it. I'd hate to lose even a remote chance of selling it. So we'll stay and I promise not to be a silly again."

"Good girl." He patted her hand. "I'm sure the blue lights on the boat tonight can be just as logically explained as the wind blowing open the door and putting your lamp out."

"Of course they can," she said, then looked puzzled. "But what could have caused them? I saw them. I know I did, and they were strange."

"Tell you what. Tomorrow I'll arrange to rent a boat and we'll row out, board the wreck and see what's there. How's that?"

"Wonderful, Papa. I can go to sleep now."

Warren lit her lamp, handed it to her, and they left the tower room. He remained outside Eve's bedroom for a while just in case he heard any

sounds of restless movements. It was no wonder a girl would be frightened here, even by commonplace things. He found himself looking apprehensively down the stairs and along the corridor.

A place like this could certainly evoke wild thoughts, and he wondered at the wisdom of allowing Eve to remain here. She was a sensitive girl and highly emotional, though also gifted with a lot of common sense. So he knew she'd be most unhappy if he brought her back to the Tuttles or sent her home to Boston. He'd investigate the boat as soon as possible, see if he could determine what caused the blue lights and end her puzzlement. Having made this decision, he entered his own room and closed the door.

Eve slept well, but only after about an hour's struggle to find sleep. The fear had a way of slipping back, especially when she was once again alone.

FIVE

Eve arose early, walked straight to the window and looked out over the sea. It was clear, sunny, with the promise of a warm, pleasant day. The fears of the night before had lost their substance and she found she could think about it in a completely detached fashion.

She could see the lobster boats, already far out, their single sail and jibs sparkling white

against the dark bluish green of the sea. Another herring boat ran well in the breeze and was headed still farther out.

The wreck was starkly clear and looked as it should—deserted. Yet she couldn't help but wonder if it was safe to go out there. At the same time, the thought of exploring the *Elizabeth B* sent a tingle of excitement through her.

She dressed quickly, choosing a pink house dress consisting of a high-necked blouse and a single skirt. If she was going to explore the beach, she didn't want to be encumbered by overskirts. She let her blonde tresses hang. They reached below her shoulders and gave her an appealing, little-girl look. Just before she left her bedroom, she took several fig leafs which she'd brought along from a drawer. She tied one of them around her waist, picked up the rest to put in a kitchen drawer which was the proper place for them.

She left the room, noticed her father's door was open and went downstairs. As she walked through the archway to the kitchen, the smell of ham frying teased her nostrils. Her father was singing a song from the latest Harvard show, sure of neither the words nor the tune, but it proved the gaiety of his spirits.

He had a thick slice of ham frying, along with eggs which he dropped onto the spider when she entered the kitchen. The smell of coffee permeated the room and the ghosts of the night before were dissipated on the streams of sunlight coming through the windows.

Eve kissed him fondly and sat down to the breakfast now on the table. "This is my job," she

protested. "But then, I don't know how I would have discovered ham and eggs."

"More from the hamper of food in the back of the rig. We're going to owe the Tuttles a great deal before this is finished."

"We're deeply in debt to them already, Papa," Eve said. Then, tilting her head archly, she asked, "Now how would you like clams for dinner?"

"Ummm . . . haven't had any in a long time."

"There must be a way to reach the beach on either side of this peninsula. I'll find a path, and if I hurry, I'll be there at low tide, though I'm not going to rush through this breakfast or the dishes afterwards."

"If you dig the clams, I'll do the dishes," he said. "Somebody provided plenty of stove wood. You know, I've been thinking about that scare you had last night. Without question, the Tuttles saw to this full woodbox and I'm sure they must have cleaned and tidied up the tower room. It's such a wonderfully restful place I imagine they thought we might use it often."

"It sounds logical," she agreed, though it didn't solve the puzzle of how the tilted-up telescope had come to be leveled on the wreck.

Eve and her father planned an attack on putting the castle into proper condition to attract a buyer. They'd start with the entrance hall, then move on to the sitting room. After that, they'd clean the other rooms on the first floor before tackling the many rooms on the second.

Eve again offered to do the dishes, but her father waved her away from the sink and the pump.

She hurried upstairs and changed her slippers for serviceable shoes. Fortunately, she'd been wise enough to bring along old ones. She placed a shawl over her shoulders and slipped its ends beneath her skirt. It made a fetching costume. She tied a fascinator under her chin and returned to the kitchen, wondering about clam rakes and pails. Her father had a rake and a bucket ready for her.

"Found them in the pantry. Good digging."

She ran out into the sunlight, marveling at its warmth. As she walked briskly toward the end of the peninsula, she saw that there was no easy way down the cliff, so she retreated and looked for other ways to reach the beach.

Well forward of the castle she saw what seemed to be a fairly well-defined path leading to the north side of the peninsula, and she started down that. It was a grassy slope at first, but as she neared the bottom of it, she passed through a fringe of stunted spruces and tamarack. Beyond this, she saw what she assumed to be smooth terrain and she started across it, but she quickly realized that she'd made a mistake. The apparently waist-high grass that seemed so easy to walk through turned out to be sedge, each blade of which was saw-toothed and sharp as a knife. Adding to her discomfiture, the ground hidden by the sedge was composed of round stones, some as big as a baseball and smoothed by the sea before being tossed onto the shore during some storm. Every time she took a step, her shoe slid off one of these round stones, and each step was an invitation to a broken or sprained ankle.

Squarely in the middle of this stretch, she came to a halt, unable to go on, not daring to turn back. Her skirt was already torn in several places and her feet and ankles ached from this impossible journey.

She was trapped and could see no way to get herself out of this dilemma. From where she stood, she saw the narrow strip of grass and daisies over which she'd crossed so blithely. If she could get back there, the ground was bound to be smooth and level, but whenever she tried to take a step, the sedge slashed at her.

Turning back to consider the distance to the sea, she saw a man walking slowly along, just beyond the edge of the surf. She called to him, but her voice was whipped back by the onshore breezes and he didn't hear her. She cupped her hands and shouted again, with the same negative result.

Then she bent down, heedless of the sedge sawing at her arms and hands, found a stone she could throw and she hurled it in the direction of the man. It fell far short, but it struck more stones and rattled against them so that the man was attracted by the noise. He looked around and saw her waving hands.

He stopped and regarded her for a moment. Then he began walking leisurely in her direction. Eve felt a wave of impatience as she watched the easy pace with which he approached her. He was probably some lazy fisherman.

"Please hurry," she called when he was within hearing distance. "I just can't stand here much longer. I'm very tired."

He didn't increase his speed, but he finally reached the sedge and came plowing through it as if it were merely tall grass. As he approached, she saw that he was young—not more than twenty-three or four. He was tall, sturdy-shouldered and slim-waisted, and there was a suggestion of great physical power about him. He moved with such incredible ease it almost seemed as if his feet didn't touch the ground. The boulders and stones were certainly no impediment to him.

He had very clear blue eyes which reflected some of the sunlight, making them breathtakingly vivid in color. He had a pleasant face under an old stocking cap. His mouth and chin were firm. It was a no-nonsense type of face. He wore knee-high boots, a pair of heavy trousers and a light sweater, dun-colored and faded.

"Morning, ma'am," he said politely.

"Will you please get me out of here?" she begged. "If I take a step, I almost fall and this . . . this . . . weed or whatever it is keeps tearing my clothes."

"It's sedge, ma'am. Real mean it can be too, unless you're dressed for it. How'd you come to be here anyway?"

"I was on my way to the beach to do some clamming, but I don't know how to approach it."

"Whyn't you walk the gravel strip?"

"What gravel strip?" She peered around, seeing nothing that resembled gravel.

"Well," he said, and his face broke into a broad grin, "seems like first things come first and we better get you out of this mess."

He took the bucket and rake from her. Then, without asking her leave, he slipped one arm down behind her legs, another around her waist, lifted her into his arms and held her high above the sedge as he moved to the strip of grass and daisies. No matter how lightly he crossed those round stones underfoot, she could not maintain a dignified balance, and every time he gave a lurch, she had to throw her arms around his neck and hang on. Above all, she didn't want to be dropped into the middle of that sedge. She wasn't behaving in a very ladylike fashion, but this was not a situation in which to exercise dignity.

Finally he put her down squarely in the center of the strip of grass and daisies. Here she found her shoes could secure a safe tread. She accepted the rake and bucket gratefully.

"Thank you very much," she said, feeling very self-conscious. Somehow she had the feeling he was laughing at her. Probably for getting caught in the sedge.

"Name's Jim Canford. I was thinking of doing a bit of clamming myself, but I forgot my rake and bucket."

"If you'll just show me how I get from here to the beach, Mr. Canford, I'll not bother you further."

"Walk," he said laconically.

"Walk where?" Eve asked testily. "I have to cross this sedge, don't I?"

"Well now, seems you might from here. But if you follow the gravel down to the point, you'll find there's no sedge and you just step onto the sand."

"Thank you again," she said.

"Glad to have been of help. You're Professor Warren's daughter, aren't you?"

"Yes," she said, wondering how he knew her.

"Pleased to meet you, Miss Warren. Heard you were coming. I guess everybody did. Mind if I walk with you? I might come in handy in case you get into more trouble."

"I think that would be very nice," she said. "Do you live here?"

"Got me a shack down the beach . . . halfway along the peninsula. I'm a lobsterman."

"I'm glad to hear that," she said. "I'd like to buy some lobsters if you have any."

"Usually have. What you want with clams *and* lobsters? Neither of 'em keeps well, so you can only use one. If you're aiming to dig clams, that's enough. Save the lobsters for later, maybe tomorrow."

"I'm quite aware of that, and I'll come for the lobsters tomorrow if I may."

"You may."

The walking wasn't all smooth. Now and then they encountered a huge boulder or a rivulet of sea water, and he guided her carefully around them. Finally they crossed over onto the beach.

"Tide's just turned," he said, "but we'll have time to dig a few. Know how to dig clams?"

"Certainly I do," she said indignantly.

"Good. I'll just sit down here on the sand and watch you," he said amiably.

She walked away from him, looking for likely signs of clams. When she found them, she dug into the hard sand, and within ten minutes her spine felt as if it was about to crack. She wished

she'd decided on the lobsters which this man Jim Canford could have provided, with no effort on her part.

She looked around. He was lounging on the sand, hands clasped behind his neck while he kept his eyes tightly closed and basked in the sunlight. She gritted her teeth and made an angry stab in an effort to pry another clam free of its sandy bed.

The bottom of her bucket was barely covered when she gave up and sat down and didn't care if she saw another clam. She refused to look in the direction of the young man, and she gave an annoyed start when he settled himself down beside her, having walked up without a sound.

"Kind of tiresome work," he sympathized.

"I thought you were after clams," she said.

"Me? Well, reckon I was, all right, but after seeing you work that hard, I kind of lost interest, I guess."

"Humph," she said tartly.

He grinned pleasantly. "Now that doesn't sound to me like a friendly statement."

"I'm tired." Eve avoided looking at him.

"Then you're doing the best thing for it—rest. Like me."

Eve turned her head and regarded him coldly. "Is that all you do—lounge in the sun?"

"Yep. Leastwise, all I feel like doing."

"You should be ashamed of yourself," she said tartly. Then she realized it was really none of her business. For all she knew, he might not have to work. "I'm sorry," she said, relenting. "It's just that I'm a little put out from being trapped in that

awful stretch of weed and having to call for help —not that I didn't appreciate it, but I felt stupid. Then, when I found these clams are so hard to dig, I felt even more stupid. And they are hard to dig," Eve added forcefully.

"Only defense they got," he said happily. "You don't expect them to lay on top of the sand to be scooped up now, do you?"

Eve burst into laughter. She couldn't help it. And when Jim Canford saw he'd finally broken through her reserve, he chuckled.

"Thank you for not getting angry at me, Mr. Canford," Eve said. "I was rude."

He lay back, letting the sun drench him again. "I don't get angry at anybody. There's no profit in it."

"You're right," she conceded. "Are you a native?"

"Well now, that's not easy to answer." He rolled over on his side and regarded her quite frankly. "You're an awful pretty girl, if you don't mind my saying so."

"Thank you, Mr. Canford. You were telling me about being a native."

"Oh yes. I was born here, I went away for a spell, I came back. I don't know where that places me. The category, that is."

"But you're a lobsterman?"

"That's how I get along. When you come down to my shack for lobsters, I'll show you my boat. Maybe take you out if you'd like to see how we catch those ugly things that cost so much at the Copley."

"Thank you for the invitation, Mr. Canford. I'll think about it."

"Nothing to be afraid of. I'm harmless as a tadpole. How are you and your daddy making out in the castle?"

"Well enough. It's such an enormous place, it frightens me. Have you ever been in it?"

"No, ma'am," he replied promptly. But his eyes, which had been regarding her soberly, lowered.

"Can you see the castle from where you live?"

"I can see one side of it. Saw lights in one of the bedrooms last night."

"How do you know it came from a bedroom if you were never in the place?" Eve asked quickly.

"Heard all the rooms on the second floor were bedrooms. Light was on the second floor."

"I see. What about the wreck? Have you ever been out to it?"

"Sure have. Done some handline fishing off her deck more'n once."

"Is anything left aboard?"

"What's there isn't worth the taking off," he said. "Some ship's furniture, ropes, braces, a locker full of old sail. Not much, I can tell you."

"Is it really in as bad condition as they say, Mr. Canford?"

"Move her off the reef and she'll go down like lead. Hole stove in her port bow, another in the hull about amidships, same side. She must have been swinging around in the teeth of that gale the night she hit. She was one of the best-made ships I ever saw. Took a lot of force to hole her like that."

"I wonder how it happened?"

Suddenly, Eve found herself liking this young man. His directness was what had caught her off-balance. Now she found it appealing and she found him easy to talk to. Somewhat daringly, she stretched out on the beach a short distance from him.

"Lots of folks do," he replied, breaking into her thoughts.

"I guess we'll never know."

"Guess not," he agreed.

Eve found herself wanting to know more about him. She said, "Do you—live alone, Mr. Canford?"

"Sure do," he replied. The corners of his mouth barely suppressed a smile.

Eve felt color flood her face. "What I meant was—don't you live with your parents?" But she knew what she really wanted to find out was whether or not he was married.

"No, ma'am. Both dead."

"I'm sorry," she said, her tone genuine.

"I look after myself real well, ma'am," he said, his smile warm.

"I'm sure you do, Mr. Canford. You also looked after me real well when I got caught in the sedge."

She smiled, remembering, but Jim Canford had sobered and was regarding her somewhat solemnly and there was a slowly dawning warmth in his eyes which had not been there before. She wondered if she looked the same way. She also became aware of their nearness to one another, and she sat up quickly.

At the same time, Jim got agilely to his feet. "Tide's coming in. You want clams for supper we'd best go dig 'em while there's still time."

Now that he took over the digging, it went faster. He seemed to have an uncanny knack for knowing just where to look. In twenty minutes, the bucket was full, but the sea was washing over his now bare feet and reaching for his rolled-up trousers.

He scampered out of the water, rolled down his trouser legs and managed to get his wet feet into his boots. The socks went into his pocket.

"I'll show you the easy way back," he said. "Then you can come here whenever you've a mind to. But don't go traipsing through the sedge again."

He carried the bucket with the rake handle jammed down between the clams. They walked slowly along the grass and daisy-covered access to the path which finally led to the castle. He set the bucket down.

"Think you can tote her from here, ma'am?"

She grasped the bucket, lifted it. "Of course," she lied. She'd have to stop a dozen times on the way back.

"Well then, I'm glad I met you and I could be of some help. You sure now, you can handle the bucket?"

"I'm not a weakling, Mr. Canford. I can take care of it. Thank you very much."

He nodded and turned away, heading back toward the beach, leaping over the rivulets left by the receding sea. She watched him for a moment, sorry to be leaving his company. He seemed to be one of the nicest young men she'd ever met. The fact that he was a lobsterman didn't bother Eve at all.

She picked up the bucket and struggled with it along the path. After about ten steps, she set it down and caught her breath. She tried again, this time going a shorter distance before she was forced to rest. Then Jim Canford came long-legging it up the path and, without a word, picked up the bucket and took her arm at the same time.

"Women can be so doggone stubborn," he said. "I knew you'd never make it with all those clams, but no, you had to say you could do it with no trouble."

"You can just set that down again." She tried to free herself of the grip on her arm. "I'll take it home myself or it won't get there."

"After all the work I did digging?" he countered. "You and your pa are going to enjoy these clams if I have to stuff them down your throats. I'll bet you don't even know how to cook them properly."

"I beg your pardon," she said tartly, her womanly qualities insulted by the suggestion she didn't know how to cook.

"Baked, on the half shell?" he demanded.

"Well . . . you just wash them and bake them."

He gave a hopeless toss of his shoulders. "You Boston folks are certainly hard-headed. Won't admit there's a thing you don't know about. Well, I'll show you, because outside of raw, it's the only good way of eating them—except for steamed."

"All right," she said. "You can show me. I'll be very grateful. You seem to be a man of all trades. Lobsterman, clam digger and chef. I'm not so obstinate I won't admit I'm ignorant of cer-

tain dishes. I never made, ate or saw clams baked on the half shell. Perhaps that makes me very stupid, but there it is, I don't know how to cook them. All I ever did was steam them."

"Five-year-old can do that," Jim declared.

"Well, there are things you don't know about, either," she accused hotly.

"Could be. Reckon I can't think of any, though."

She glanced down at his large boots. "What are the latest dances?" she demanded.

He frowned darkly. "What's dancing got to do with . . . ?"

"We were talking about being proficient in certain things. I'm ignorant as to the preparation of clams. But I'm a very good dancer. I love dancing. I expect that I excel there. You say you can do anything. I don't think you can dance."

He nodded sheepishly. "We keep on this way and you'll find out there are a million things I can't do. Ever catch a lobster?"

Again she burst into laughter, and again he joined her. He let go of her elbow and sought her hand. His strong fingers intertwined with hers and they walked gaily toward the castle like a couple of school kids.

As they neared it, they slowed down. She saw Jim studying it curiously. To her, it seemed larger than ever and even more forbidding. She wondered what was going through his mind.

"Man must have been out of his mind to build such a place," he observed dryly.

"You're speaking of my uncle, Mr. Canford."

"I'm aware of that. I say it again, he must have been crazy."

"I'm afraid you don't understand. My uncle met a girl in Scotland whose name was Elizabeth. Her father was an earl, very rich, and he lived in a castle. Just like this one. In fact, this is a replica. My uncle built it so that when he brought his bride here, she wouldn't be lonely. You see, Mr. Canford, my uncle was inspired by love. Perhaps that does make a man mad, but to a woman, a gesture like this is the same as placing his heart in her hands."

"You make it sound like a beautiful sunset."

"I think that's about what their love was like."

"Sort of changes my opinion of it. I just thought Jab . . . your uncle was a vain man who built this to satisfy his ego. Love—now—that's a different reason . . . a good reason. Reckon even an ignorant lobsterman with two left feet, who can't dance worth a hoot, can understand that."

SIX

Professor Warren stepped from the castle door to greet them. He smiled and offered Jim Canford his hand, while he skillfully appraised the younger man.

"This is Mr. Jim Canford," Eve said. "My father, Professor Warren of Harvard University."

The men clasped hands, and instantly Warren sensed that here was a warm-hearted, sensible

young man. Warren noticed, too, that Canford seemed perfectly at ease, despite his fisherman's garb.

"Mr. Canford," Eve explained, "rescued me from . . . what was it?"

"Sedge patch," Jim said. "It's a plant that's got teeth like a tiger. I'm judging that from the way she was yelling."

"She does look pretty bedraggled," Warren said, grinning. "Did you dig all of those clams, Eve?"

"Well . . . ." Eve was suddenly conscious of her torn skirt.

"Your daughter didn't do too badly, sir. She's kind of obstinate, though. Didn't want any help lugging the bucket back."

Warren hefted the weight of the clams. "She's very proud," he said in a confidential voice. "Runs in the family."

Eve found herself beginning to blush. She tilted her head defiantly and said, "Papa, Mr. Canford accused me of not being able to bake clams the Downeaster way."

"Can you?" her father asked.

"No—but he has offered to show me how."

Warren said, "Well, that's very nice of you, Mr. Canford. I judge there are enough clams here for perhaps eight or ten people—raw, steamed, boiled, fried or baked. Therefore, I propose to let you demonstrate your talents as a cook and, in return, I insist you have dinner with us."

"I was sort of hoping you'd say that," Jim Canford smiled. "Fact, I was praying for it. All right now—let's get at it."

He picked up the bucket of clams and marched

straight to the kitchen. Eve thought that his sense of direction was uncanny for never having been in the castle before, but she didn't comment.

He pumped a sinkful of water, dumped in the clams and scrubbed them. He found a clam knife in one of the drawers and began opening the shells, cutting out the succulent meat until he had a mound of it. He then chopped the clams into very small pieces which he placed in a pan, added their own juices and put them on the back of the stove to simmer while he next chopped onions, a green pepper, tore the leaves off stalks of celery and chopped that too. All of these staples came out of the Tuttle hamper, which seemed to have held a little of everything. He added this to the simmering clams, stirred them for five minutes.

"Miss Eve," he said, "if you got a rolling pin and some plain crackers, I'd be grateful if you'd just crush them and roll them fine as you can."

Eve took crackers from the hamper, found a rolling pin in the pantry and crushed the crackers into a fine meal. Jim stirred this into the clam-and-vegetable mixture and then spooned it onto cleaned half shells which had been placed on a large baking pan. He added a small dab of butter to each and popped them into the oven.

"Take twenty minutes or so. Won't need anything else. I made enough. Just coffee to go with them."

Eve set a large pot of it on the stove, then went upstairs to change out of the torn, bedraggled skirt. She chose another of pink and white striped cotton.

Downstairs, she entered the large dining room.

Her father had unboarded the windows and taken the coverings off the furniture. There was an enormous table of rich, dark wood with at least eighteen chairs set around it. There were twin sideboards, and these were what attracted Eve. She opened the drawer of one and the pleasing scent of verbena touched her nostrils as she lifted the covering from the linens to choose one for the kitchen table. She also found some silver so tightly wrapped in flannel cloths there wasn't a trace of tarnish on it.

Twenty minutes later they sat down to a beautifully set table. Eve felt she'd had at least a part in making the dinner pleasing. There was a huge platter of clams which her father served. The conversation was light-hearted, adding the enjoyment of the meal. Eve kept the cups filled with steaming coffee.

"Mr. Canford," Eve said, when the filling in the last clam had disappeared, "I am indebted to you. It was really a fine way to serve clams. I'll make them again—often."

"Thanks. Your saying that makes it worthwhile," he replied. "Coffee's very good."

She studied him for a moment. He had excellent table manners, he could carry on a brisk conversation and there was sound logic in his thinking. Eve liked his eyes. They were wide-spaced, deep-set, and when he laughed, they sparkled with laughter too. Once or twice she believed her father deliberately led this young man into the discussion of subjects that would have been far beyond the ken of an ordinary lobsterman. Jim Canford held his own with ease.

It was mid-afternoon before he left. "Thank you for everything," he said earnestly. "Miss Eve, may I have the pleasure of calling on you again —soon?"

"Of course," she said. "If I'm out, you'll undoubtedly find me, because I won't be far away, Mr. Canford."

"Incidentally," Warren said, "I noticed a small outbuilding down at the point, not far from the water. Do you know what it is?"

"Boathouse. Cap'n Jabez used to keep a small boat or two there. Nothing else. Still there for all I know."

"Thank you."

Jim walked away from the castle and looked back only once, just before he turned down the path to the beach. Then he smiled and waved and Eve raised her hand in answer. Warren glanced at his daughter.

"I never saw you so animated, my dear. I take it you like this young man."

"Oh . . . he's nice. A gentleman. Really I was surprised. At first I thought he'd be just someone who'd help me out of the sedge and go on his way. But he was so . . . thoughtful . . . and interesting, even if he did laugh at me."

"Eve, let me tell you one thing about Jim Canford. He's not only intelligent, but extremely well educated, though he makes a few weak attempts to indicate he's not."

"Isn't that odd, Papa?"

"No odder than this one other fact I can tell you about him. He's no lobsterman."

"But he said . . ."

"I know what he said. Lobstermen, my dear, have their hands in sea water almost every day of the year. Winter is especially hard on their hands —they grow large and puffy and get very, very red. The color never seems to leave them and the skin becomes as tough as old leather. Jim Canford's hands were not too soft, understand, but not hard either. Certainly they're not red and tough. So our young friend seems to present an enigma. I'm sorry about that, because I rather liked him."

"Perhaps he has a reason for this," Eve said slowly.

"There's no doubt of it, but the reason could be important to us. I'm sure he's been in this castle more than once. He was able to find household utensils with an ease that could come only from having been here often. Also, he knew his way to the kitchen."

Eve didn't tell him that Canford had denied ever having been in the castle. It was one of the first times in her life that she had ever withheld anything important from her father.

They went to work in the sitting room. Warren had already removed, folded and stored the muslin coverings, and Eve marveled at the lovely furniture. It was obvious the rooms in the castle hadn't been completely furnished, for Elizabeth hadn't lived long enough. But the pieces which were in this room made it look like a museum. The only wall decoration was a life-size portrait of Elizabeth. Eve studied it, enchanted with the oval face and dark brown eyes which seemed to

glow with happiness. Her black hair was center-parted and drawn down on either side to the back to form a chignon at the base of her neck. Her beautiful shoulders were revealed in the low-cut bodice of the full-skirted gown. How Eve wished she could have known her. She looked so vital, Eve wondered if it really was the severe Maine winter had proved too much for her or because Jabez was away and the loneliness of the castle and its isolation was more than she could stand.

Eve moved reluctantly away from the painting and turned her attention to the room. She'd found furniture oil in the kitchen and she vigorously set to work polishing the furniture. Warren cleaned the floor, washed the many windows which looked out onto the sea, and placed wood in the fireplace. All it needed was a match to blaze brightly and send cheer through the room.

It wasn't until the coming darkness impeded their progress that they stopped. They put their equipment away, cleaned up, and returned to the kitchen where Eve washed the rest of the clams and set them on the stove to steam.

They ate these, dipped in melted butter, seasoned with pepper and chives. There were enough to make a full and satisfying meal. Warren lit more lamps and they sat in the kitchen, drinking their coffee.

"Eve," he said seriously, "I'm afraid it would take us weeks to make this castle look as it should. I think the wisest thing for us to do is clean the floors of dust, unboard the rest of the windows, uncover the furniture . . . fortunately, the rooms aren't overburdened with it."

"I'll polish the furniture," Eve said. "It still has a newness to it, so it's easy."

Her father smiled at her enthusiasm. "You must be very tired."

"I think I'm too excited to be tired, Papa. Why don't you go to bed? You've done some very hard physical labor."

He nodded agreement. "It makes me realize I'm completely out of condition. Then too, we had quite a journey. Oh—I've examined the tower room very thoroughly, and I couldn't find a trace of any intruder. Remind me to ask the Tuttles if they kept the room up all this time. Somebody did, that much I know."

Eve insisted on doing the dishes, letting her father sit by the kitchen stove, basking in its warmth and puffing contentedly on his pipe. But as soon as he let the fire die out in the stove, a chill came over the room. They lit candles and lamps in the entrance hall before they stepped out into the pleasant night for a few minutes.

"Papa," she asked, "are we going out to the wreck before we leave?"

"As I told you last night, I thought we'd borrow a boat and row out today, but Mr. Canford delayed us. Tomorrow we'll go for sure. What good it will do, I can't say. Probably none, but we should look over my brother's ship if only for sentimental reasons and to see if we can discover what caused those blue lights."

They strolled beside the castle in the direction of the cliff overlooking the point. The moon was already riding the night sky and it promised to be a fine evening.

They sat down on the curved cement bench and regarded the shadowy outline of the wreck with a purposeful intentness. Neither had mentioned the fact, but they were both looking for the blue lights dancing above the deck.

"Papa," Eve asked, "do you think I imagined those lights?"

"If you did, it's the first time you ever let imagination run away with you, my dear. No, I believe you did see those lights, or whatever they were. All we have to do is find the explanation for them."

"Maybe we'll learn what they are tomorrow when we go out there."

"Yes. If Jabez kept a boat in the boathouse down at the point, we can use it."

"If it's not there, I'm sure Mr. Canford will loan us one," Eve said.

"Yes . . . yes, that's a thought. We'll see tomorrow, eh? Frankly, I'm quite anxious to have a look at the ship. There are many things about her accident that have never been explained to me, and I don't mind saying that I've never been satisfied."

"Do you think the ship was deliberately sailed onto those rocks?"

"I doubt it very much. At least Jabez wouldn't have been responsible for that, because he loved that ship. Even more than ever after Elizabeth died. To Jabez, the ship was the only thing left. He'd have ridden out any storm in her rather than run her onto rocks."

"Do you think someone else did?"

"Let's consider it this way, Eve. The *Elizabeth B* was a fine, expensive ship. As stout as they

come. She'd sailed around the Horn several times, weathered the most ferocious storms. So why couldn't she have weathered this one? And in the teeth of such a storm, why was Jabez so close to shore? Especially these rocks. They were practically outside his castle windows. If there was ever a reef he knew all about, it was this one."

Eve pondered the thought for a moment, then said, "I was wondering if he no longer cared. Perhaps he wanted to join Elizabeth and deliberately steered the ship onto the rocks, knowing it would be certain death."

Warren smiled. "You're letting your imagination run away with you. No, dear, your Uncle Jabez would never have done such a thing. Not to himself or his crew."

"Then the only answer I can get from what you told me is that someone else must have run the ship onto the rocks."

"It's a possibility, but one factor makes it hard to accept. Every man aboard died. Nobody would commit suicide by wrecking the ship."

"How can you be certain everyone drowned, Papa?"

"That's what they tell me. I've no proof of it."

"Shouldn't there have been a log?"

"Jabez was extremely careful in the keeping of his ship's log, but if one was found, I was never told about it."

"I wonder if there's anything among the papers in the tower room desk that might give us a clue," Eve said thoughtfully.

"I haven't had time to examine them, but I'll make a point of it as soon as possible."

"I'm not very tired, Papa. May I go over them tonight?"

"Well, I don't know, my dear. You had quite a scare in that room last night."

"That's the very reason I'd like to spend part of tonight there. To prove to myself that all my fears were imaginary. I really like that room."

"Very well. I'll leave my bedroom door open. If you get frightened, call out. I'm sure I'll be able to hear you. Want to go in now?"

"There's no hurry, unless you're very tired."

"I'm all right," he lied. He'd never felt so exhausted in years.

Eve's brows pursed thoughtfully. "I'm looking forward to the dinner and dance the Tuttles are giving for us."

"So am I. It will give us an opportunity to meet the folks hereabouts, and I think it would be a good idea. I'm beginning to believe we'll be here for longer than I thought."

"Good," Eve said. "It will give me time to enjoy the castle and the sea before we have to give it all up. Papa, isn't it strange that Jabez left nothing but the castle?"

"Well, that mass of stone and cement cost a pretty penny."

"He paid for it in cash, though. Suppose it did drain off his surplus money, that was four years before he died. Didn't he make any money during these four years?"

"I've thought of that, but there doesn't seem to be any answer. There was no bank account, at least in this country. No investments."

"Were there any outstanding bills?"

"Hmmm," he smiled slightly. "You're quite an interrogator, my dear. There were no bills, which means he must have been solvent, and if the last payments he made of his debts exactly evened his liquid worth, I think that's stretching things too far. You're right—there should have been something more than this castle left. I intend to ask Jabez's bank about it."

"I didn't see a bank in Indian Cove."

"It's in East Machias. If I can manage to get there, I'll certainly inquire. In fact, I'll write a letter tomorrow."

"Good. We may as well get to the bottom of everything," Eve said. "Now we can go back if you like. I know you must be tired."

Warren didn't protest. They walked slowly back to the castle, pausing now and then to turn and look at the wreck, but there was never any sign of the blue lights. The moon was coming up again and it started to brighten the night. Slowly the countryside began to respond to the light by painting elongated, weird shadows everywhere. Somewhere beyond the castle, a pond of frogs set up a loud croaking to greet the moon and suddenly, in front of Eve and her father, a red fox trotted unconcernedly across the estate on some night prowl of his own. Eve thought she'd never seen so beautiful a setting in her life.

Inside, Warren bolted the door and checked the kitchen stove to see that the fire was out, though the definite chill indicated it must be. He lit the oil lamps and Eve took two of them, kissed her father good night and went upstairs.

In her room, she undressed and put on her heavy woolen dressing gown. Then, armed with a lamp, she made her way to the tower room. She was pleased to see her father had placed some whale oil lamps there along with matches to light them. She felt perfectly calm, but she lit them anyway. There was a fire laid in the grate, so she lit that too, and soon its comforting warmth relaxed her and she again had a feeling of contentment at being here, a feeling that this room was a refuge—a sanctuary.

She peered through the telescope for a few moments, but the wreck appeared to be deserted and there were no blue lights. The moon had illuminated the tilted ship in a strange, luminous outline, making it seem like a ghost ship, one that could vanish and reappear at will. It was a trick of moonlight and shadows.

She sat down at the desk, set the lamp where it would give her the best light, and began to examine the contents of the drawers.

Much of the correspondence had to do with cargoes. However, there were also some letters from sea-going friends with their own ships and a special packet of mail was from Elizabeth's father, written after her death. Eve apologized mentally to her uncle's memory and read the letters. It seemed Elizabeth's people may have been nobility, but they also appeared to be short of cash, and Jabez had been sending them rather large sums. Some of the letters were in deep appreciation.

She found an old ledger in which accounts were meticulously kept, money Jabez had been pay-

ing out. There were no books from the ship, however, to show how much he paid his crew, for example. Such records would be kept aboard ship. She intended to look for them.

Then she noticed something she believed to be significant. From 1860 until after the end of the Civil War there seemed to be no records of any kind. The new ship had been bought two years before the war began. Eve remembered that because the gifts she received came from more remote places than his first ship had reached.

Why, she asked herself, were these records missing? Since after the war everything seemed to be quite in order, although any accounts of money received were simply not among the papers or in the ledgers.

Unless Jabez had become very careless about his accounts, this was extremely strange. As she recalled her father's estimation of Jabez, the sea captain had been almost annoyingly fastidious about his record-keeping.

Also, the letters from Elizabeth's father often congratulated Jabez on the success of his business. A success without money? The sums sent to Scotland were not large enough to induce such compliments from Elizabeth's father. Ample, but not as large as the income of a successful trader and ship owner. The *Elizabeth B* hadn't been just a tramp schooner, but a regularly scheduled passenger vessel as well, and one of apparently high repute. Where were the passenger lists, the income records?

Eve sat back and rubbed her eyes, tired from the tedious reading of the records, then set about

replacing the papers. As she did so, her fingers encountered an object which she quickly picked up. It was a burnished, well-browned meerschaum pipe with a curved stem and a large bowl. Obviously, it had been Jabez's. She replaced it in the desk drawer and then arose.

She stretched lazily, then automatically walked to the telescope. Before she put her eye to it, she saw the dancing blue lights again. They seemed dimmer than previously and when she could put her eye to the glass, they had disappeared.

She felt cold prickles of fear crawl over her again. Those strange lights seemed to portend something evil about to happen. Up to now she'd felt secure and safe here in this room. But she had felt that way last night until she had seen those blue lights. Then the moon had been obscured by clouds, plunging the night into darkness. At the same time the wind had risen, forcing open the french doors and blowing out the lamp.

Resolutely she looked through the glass again, but the blue lights were gone. She moved the telescope slightly and quite unexpectedly brought into view a man on a horse, close by the edge of the cliff.

She cried out in alarm, but then the horse moved and so did the rider, shifting his place in the saddle. He was human and not to be feared. Eve picked up the oil lamp, left the other lamps burning in the tower room and hurried down to her father's bedroom. His door was open, but he was sound asleep and she decided not to disturb him. She felt she could cope with this man on horseback, whoever he might be.

She ran downstairs, placed the lamp on the table in the reception hall and stepped out into the night. She walked rapidly in the direction of the point, determined not to let fear overwhelm her. Now she could see the cliff, but there was no man, no horse. They seemed to have vanished.

Her heartbeat quickened, but she resisted an impulse to run back to the castle. Instead, she stood perfectly quiet, listening for the sound of a horse. It wouldn't be easy to hear, for the surf was pounding against the rocks.

Then there was a rush of hoofbeats behind her. She whirled and a huge black horse bore down on her. The animal veered, reared and came down under perfect control. The man in the saddle cried out Eve's name.

"Elisha," she answered, relief flooding through her. "Oh, Elisha, I'm glad to see you."

He swung out of the saddle and hurried up to her with both hands extended.

"What are you doing out here this time of night?" he asked, taking her hands in his.

"I was . . . looking for something. But I might ask the same question of you."

"I came over because I was worried about you. We thought you and your papa might be over today, but since you weren't, I thought I'd better come to see if all was well. In the kind of solitude this peninsula offers, a lot of things could have happened to you and your papa."

"How nice of you, Elisha," Eve said, smiling. "We're quite all right. Of course, we would have been in town to buy groceries if your mother hadn't packed such an enormous hamper of food.

We're most grateful and deeply in your debt."

"Nonsense," he replied gaily. Then sobering, added, "What are you doing out here in your dressing gown?"

"Goodness," Eve said in consternation. "I quite forgot what I was wearing. I saw something . . ." She gave Elisha a searching look, "Was that you sitting your horse at the point overlooking the sea?"

"Yes . . . did you see me there?"

"From the tower room. I wondered who it might be, so I came out to see."

"I was looking out at the wreck, thinking about Jabez and that wonderful ship. But I'm sorry I frightened you."

"Had you been there long?" she asked hopefully.

"A while. I'm not sure of the time."

Eve hesitated a moment, then blurted, "Did you see blue lights out on the wreck?"

"Blue lights? Now why would there be lights out there? And why should they be blue?"

"I don't know, Elisha, but I saw them tonight and I saw them last night."

He said, "I saw nothing." He stepped closer and concern etched his features. "You are upset. And you must be cold. Please—let me take you inside."

"Thank you, Elisha. Truly, I am glad of your company."

She wrapped her dressing gown close about her, and Elisha placed an arm lightly around her waist. Eve took no offense, for she felt comforted by his presence. On the way back she told

him of the progress she and her father had made so far in the giant task of cleaning the castle. However, she didn't mention Jim Canford. Not because she didn't think of it, but she wasn't going to bring up the name of another young man when Elisha was showing her such attention. He seemed so interested in everything she told him and he never once took his eyes off her.

When they reached the castle, he tied his horse to the hitchrack and escorted Eve into the house. The dank chill was evident in the reception hall and she thought of the roaring fire in the tower grate.

"We can go up to the room Jabez built for himself. I have a fire going there and it's pleasant and cheerful. Have you ever seen it, Elisha?"

"Once or twice. I was fascinated by it, but I was young then and I suppose I had aspirations for a life at sea. I've learned better since."

"We must be real quiet going upstairs so as not to wake Papa. He's very tired, poor darling."

They made the trip to the tower room in silence, Elisha carrying the whale oil lamp. The brightness of the other lamps, coupled with the cheery warmth of the fire, was a welcoming sight.

Elisha looked about. "I was right. It is a fascinating room—a wonderful room. And how well you've cleaned it. It's spotless, and after three years there must have been a great deal of . . ." He stopped short and stared at the telescope. "I didn't recall there was a 'scope here."

"It's fastened to the floor," Eve said, "so it must have been here. You probably forgot it. What sailor would be without a telescope on his bridge,

and I have a notion that's what Jabez called this room."

She wasn't as light-hearted as she sounded, however. She and her father had been certain it was the Tuttles who had seen to it that this room was cleaned. Even the windows sparkled. Now it was apparent they'd had nothing to do with it and a fresh mystery was added to the ones already plaguing her. The footsteps in the house the day she entered still puzzled her, plus the blue lights on the wreck which no one but she had seen.

SEVEN

"Please sit down," Eve said, motioning Elisha to a chair near the fireplace. She chose the one behind the desk. There were still a few papers to be put away, and they caught Elisha's attention.

"Looks as if you and your father are doing some sort of work up here," he commented.

"Those are papers we found in the desk. Some old records Jabez left," she explained. She gathered them up and returned them to the drawer.

He leaned forward. "Eve, the main reason I rode over here was to remind you of the affair the day after tomorrow. The dinner and dance in honor of you and your father."

"We're looking forward to it," she said. "We're very anxious to meet your friends. I suppose many of them knew my aunt and uncle."

"Your uncle, yes," Elisha said, sitting back in the chair. "But your aunt was a very retiring person. She didn't seem to want to make friends with the people here. In fact, I never met her."

"Really?" Eve looked her surprise. She thought of the warm brown eyes and face that glowed with happiness from the portrait on the wall of the sitting room. "She didn't seem like an unfriendly person to me."

"You knew her?" he asked, surprised.

"Oh no. But only this afternoon I studied her portrait."

Elisha's brows raised in puzzlement. "I'm afraid I never saw it."

"Then I will show it to you before you leave. She was beautiful. And she doesn't look the least bit frail—at least, not to me."

"Perhaps the artist gave her a vitality she didn't have."

"Perhaps," Eve said. "But somehow, I don't think so. She doesn't seem like a person who'd allow that type of artist to do her portrait."

"My, my, you've formed quite an attachment for her," Elisha said, looking amused. "Have you forgotten—this place is supposed to be haunted?"

She smiled. "I haven't forgotten, and there are times when I think it is. But if it's my Aunt Elizabeth who walks the corridors, I don't think I'll be afraid."

"I wonder. I wouldn't care to meet a ghost, regardless of how kindly it seemed to be. And I particularly wouldn't care to meet one in this large, half-furnished, isolated, dreary castle."

In spite of herself, Eve felt a shiver of apprehen-

sion. "Stop it, Elisha," she chided, "you are frightening me."

"I don't mean to," he said seriously. "But frankly, I don't like you staying here. Aren't you the least bit afraid?"

"Yes," she admitted reluctantly. "But I must stay here with my father. Besides, whatever fears I have are groundless, because nothing has happened to me or my father."

Elisha shrugged his shoulders in a gesture of defeat. "In that case, I can't persuade you and your father to return to our house and be our guests."

"I'm afraid not," Eve said. "But thank you for your concern."

"It's partly selfish," he conceded. "I'd see much more of you at our house. We could have a lot of fun together."

"I'm sure we could," she agreed. "But just now, this castle takes all my time. It's a selfish taskmaster."

"I have patience," he said. "And I also have the party tomorrow night. I'm afraid I'll be selfish with you. I'll want every dance."

"That would be selfish," she said, coloring, but pleased with his attention. "I want to meet your friends, get acquainted with them. How can I if I don't mix with them?"

He sighed. "Very well. But I'm going to have to think of some scheme to delay your return to Boston."

He clasped his hands behind his head and leaned back. "This is a great room. A man's

room." His eyes drifted over to the telescope again. "Been looking at the wreck, Eve?"

"Oh yes. By day you can see it very well. At night . . . it's just a lot of shadows. And blue lights flitting above the deck."

"I don't understand those blue lights."

He arose and went to the 'scope, peering through it for a few moments. Then he resumed his chair.

"There's nothing on that wreck to attract anyone," he said matter of factly. "Especially at night. In fact, I'd consider it dangerous to prowl around then. The ship is tilted at a crazy angle and makes walking her decks very difficult. Below, everything is off balance and you keep hearing the sea pound against her hull as if the ship were going to be washed off the rocks and sunk at any moment."

"I did see those blue lights, though," Eve insisted.

"You saw something," he said tolerantly. "Perhaps moonlight reflections. Except for you and your father, no one's even on the peninsula, let alone the wreck."

"Jim Canford is," she countered.

Elisha looked puzzled. "Who?"

"Jim Canford. He's a lobsterman."

"I never heard of him. Canford? Odd, the name's not even familiar. Are you sure you got it right? What does he look like?"

"Well, he's quite tall. A slim young man about your age. He has a sturdy face with blue eyes and light brown hair."

Elisha wagged his head from side to side. "I simply can't associate him with anyone I know, and I know everybody in these parts. When we get strangers, it's an event."

"He lives in a shack on the north side of the peninsula."

"Shack? There are no shacks anywhere on the peninsula. The only other house near here belonged to Mark Bryant. He was first mate on the *Elizabeth B* and he died out there in that storm with everyone else. It's been vacant since his widow moved to Connecticut."

"Well, all I know is what he told me. He's a very real person—no ghost. He showed me how to dig for clams. He even baked some here."

"Well now, I am interested. I scarcely get to see you, and some stranger goes clamming with you, cooks for you—was there anything else he did?"

Eve giggled. "He rescued me from the sedge. That's how we got acquainted."

"My dear, I believe every word you told me, but I'm very much afraid that man was lying to you."

She frowned thoughtfully, remembered Jim's familiarity with the castle. But somehow, she couldn't bring herself to tell Elisha about it.

"What purpose would he have in lying?"

"I don't know," Elisha said thoughtfully, "but I'm going to find out. I'm very curious."

"I'm sure when you meet him, you'll like him," she said, rising. "I'm going to send you home now, Elisha. But first, I want you to see my aunt's portrait."

He blew out all the lamps except two which he carried to light their way. Again, air drafts touched Eve's face and moved her dressing gown, but Elisha's presence was reassuring. Downstairs, she led him to the sitting room. It wasn't easy to see the portrait with just the two lamps, but he held them up and exclaimed over the young woman's beauty.

"I knew you'd be enchanted by her," Eve said, her tone pleased.

"I am," he agreed. "And even more by you."

He bent and his lips touched hers for only a moment, then he stepped back. "Please don't be angry. I couldn't resist you."

He placed the lamps on the table and walked briskly to the reception hall. The door closed quietly before Eve got her bearings. She was stunned for a moment by Elisha's gesture, but she could take no offense because he had meant none. She picked up the lamps and bolted the door before she went upstairs. On her way, she thought of what a pleasant visit it had been with him. She found herself liking him more than at their first meeting. In fact, she found herself liking him a great deal.

She closed the door of her room, set her lamps down and prepared for bed. She was tired tonight, but beset by neither fear nor worry. Elisha's visit had served to calm her, so the loneliness of the castle didn't close in on her.

She enjoyed a fine, restful sleep and when she went downstairs the following morning, her father again had breakfast waiting.

"We're running out of food," he said. "Have to go to town today."

"Let me go," she begged. "I can handle the rig and you won't have to tire yourself."

"Fine," he agreed. "I hoped you'd make the offer. Tell me, how did Elisha enjoy his visit with you?"

"Papa, you were eavesdropping."

"Well, I remained awake for a short time after the two of you went up to the tower room. After all, my dear, I have to serve as chaperone. However, when you didn't cry out for help, I assumed Elisha to be a perfect gentleman and I went to sleep."

"He *is* a perfect gentleman. He really came over to remind us of the dinner and dance tomorrow night. As if we need to be reminded."

"You're really looking forward to it, aren't you, dear?"

"Oh yes, Papa," she exclaimed. "I want to meet people, hear music and dance and be gay."

"You deserve it," he said. "This place is too bleak for anyone as young as you."

"No, Papa," she argued. "I want to be here with you. And I'm getting used to the castle. It might, in time, even grow on me. There are so many rooms I want to explore. Do you know, I haven't even found Aunt Elizabeth's room yet. Truly, I haven't looked for it. But it should be interesting."

"It should indeed," he observed.

"And something else, Papa," Eve said, remindfully touching a finger to her brow.

"Go on, tell me."

"When I brought Elisha up to the tower room, he remarked on how clean it was and complimented me on it. So certainly the Tuttles didn't have it cleaned for us."

"That's interesting." Warren slipped the eggs off the spider onto Eve's plate, added the crisp bacon and took the biscuits from the oven. "Someone cleaned it, that's certain."

"And Papa—those blue lights—I saw them again. Yet Elisha was at the point at just about the same time and he didn't see them." Her brow furrowed worriedly. "Can I be imagining them?"

"You saw something. I'm sure of that."

"Elisha also said he never heard of Jim Canford and that Jim doesn't live in any shack on the north shore because there are no shacks there. Just one house, in which Mark Bryant lived. He was first mate on Jabez's ship."

"Perhaps Jim refers to the house as a shack, not meaning anything by it. Quite possibly he rented it."

"But I gathered from the way he spoke, that he's practically a native around here, yet Elisha doesn't know him."

"Let's face it, Eve. Jim Canford wasn't completely honest with us."

Eve nodded, remembering his familiarity with the kitchen, yet stating he'd never been in the castle before.

Her father broke into her thoughts. "When will you drive into town?"

"This morning, I think." She paused, then added, "Are you going out to the wreck today?"

"I thought about it."

"Will you please wait until I return from town? I want to go with you."

"Very well. If Jabez kept a dory in the boat-house on the beach, we'll certainly row out. If there's no boat, I'll look up Jim Canford. Be well to have a talk with him, anyway."

She drank her coffee, then arose to clear the table, but Warren refused to let her. "It's a fairly long drive to and from town. If we want to examine the wreck by daylight, you'd best start as quickly as you can."

"I'll get ready at once," she said.

"Good. I'll harness the rig and have it waiting."

She hurried to her bedroom, excited now about her first real visit to the town. She didn't intend to call on the Tuttles, as the supper was to be held tomorrow evening. She hadn't been able to pack many clothes, but the closet already held her evening dress which some heaven-sent inspiration and caused her to take along. She'd also included a dress of green foulard. It was quite suitable for her purpose, being plain in front, with the fullness confined to the back. Over it, she wore a jacket. Its lack of bulk would make it easier to handle the reins. Her straw hat, which sat forward on her head, was trimmed with green satin and wild flowers.

She picked up her green satin reticule and went downstairs. Outside, the rig was ready. She kissed her father, then drove the rig to the dirt road which led to town.

She had covered the first five minutes of the hour-long trip when a figure moved out from the path to the beach. It was Jim Canford, and he waved her to a stop.

"Morning, ma'am. Will you accept a passenger? I'll take over the reins for you."

"Of course," Eve said, finding the sight of him very pleasing.

He climbed up and took over the reins. "You look so gol-darned beautiful and you're dressed up so smart, I know you must be going into town. So am I and I appreciate the lift."

"It's the least I can do after you digging and baking those clams," she said, but she was secretly glad of his company.

He grinned. "I enjoyed my visit with you and your pa. How is he?"

"Just fine. May I ask you a personal question, Mr. Canford?"

"Ask away," he said airily.

"Do you know Elisha Tuttle?"

Jim gave her an odd look. "I know who he is."

"But you don't know him personally?"

"No. Why do you ask?"

"Last night he rode over . . ."

"Alone?" Jim interrupted, a note of excitement in his voice.

"Yes." Eve looked surprised. "What difference would that make?"

"None." Jim smiled. "Should have known he would. Anyone as pretty as you around."

"Oh, it wasn't just to see me. His parents have invited papa and me to a dinner and dance tomor-

row night. He came to make certain we hadn't forgotten. Also, he wanted to make certain we were all right."

"Well," Jim's sigh seemed like one of relief. "That was mighty thoughtful of him. But I still say it was just another excuse to see you."

"I asked him if he knew you," Eve said, pursuing the subject. "Told him you said you lived in a shack on the north shore."

"And he said there weren't any shacks on the north shore."

"Yes, he did. But he said there was one house."

"There is," Jim admitted. "I rent it. It's owned by the estate of Mark Bryant."

"That's what Elisha said."

"Seems like Elisha said a great deal."

Eve laughed. "You sound touchy. But I'm glad you explained it, Mr. Canford."

"Couldn't you just call me Jim? Please—so I can call you Eve?"

"All right, Jim."

"It's true, Eve, I'm not well known here. And about my calling the house a shack—that was just a poor choice of words. About my being a native son of Indian Cove—that's the truth, but I've been away a long time. Ever since I was small, so nobody knows me any more, but I'll bet I can point out and name practically everybody we meet."

"Thank you for telling me, Jim."

"Got something else to tell you. I saw your father in work clothes hitching up the rig. I hurried home, got into my best suit and raced to meet you. Got a little business in town myself."

Eve lowered her eyes for fear they would reveal the pleasure his words had caused.

"I hope you'll think differently of me now that I've explained everything."

She wasn't certain that he had explained everything—his familiarity with the castle, for instance—but she wasn't going to dwell on it. He was good company, she liked being with him and she was going to enjoy herself.

"Well, Eve?" Jim was regarding her curiously.

"Jim, I think you're one of the nicest persons I ever met. And I believe every word you said."

"That makes me so danged happy," he said, "that I've got an urge to just lean over and kiss you."

"Don't you dare," she said hastily, hoping she sounded as if she meant it.

"Don't worry," he laughed. "If I did, it would be all over town in an hour or so."

The rig was moving at a moderate clip along the road and they were now off the peninsula and on the mainland. She could see farmhouses in the distance, and they passed several closer to the road.

"I don't know what you mean. How would they know . . . ?"

She stopped short and colored prettily, because even she realized that the way she said it indicated she was willing to be kissed.

He chuckled at her blushing cheeks. "Eve, nobody moves a step hereabouts that he or she isn't watched every minute. All the housewives, without exception, have telescopes, and one of

the favorite sports is to train it on anything that moves."

"Why . . . why I never heard of such a thing. It's an invasion of privacy."

"No ma'am, not exactly. It's a sport, like I said. It's an amusement. In Boston, you go to the theatre, or have supper out, or visit friends. Here there's little of that going on and people need amusement—hence, the spyglass and the watchers who will talk about you and me taking this ride for weeks. They'll speculate on every possible reason that brought us together, from you taking me to the constable, to the fact that we might be spooning or even eloping."

"Jim, you're impossible," she said, laughter bubbling from her. "You're very brash."

"But you like me?" His tone was teasing, but his eyes were deadly serious.

"Jim, can they read lips, do you think?" Eve asked, ignoring his question.

"Not at this distance. Do you like me, Eve?"

"Of course I do. I like everybody."

"That gives me great confidence and satisfaction," he said flatly. "I mean liking me in a special sort of way."

"I'll make you stop this rig and order you off if you keep on with that sort of talk," she warned, in what she hoped was a stern voice.

"You'd never live it down. You're stuck with me, so you might as well admit you like me in a special sort of way."

"Very well, I like you in a special way. I won't tell you what's special about it, however. And now

please be on your best behavior. We're coming into the town."

"Depend on it," he assured her. "Indian Cove has strict rules for behavior. And there's the man who'll enforce them."

Eve saw a tall, very thin man of about sixty walking with the erectness and springy step of a youth. He had a quiet air of authority about him.

"That's Josh Drennan, he's town constable and has been for nearly fifty years. I don't think he's made a dozen arrests in all that time, but he's still constable in a town where nothing ever happens."

"If you're trying to prove you know these people, don't bother," she said. "I believe you did live here at one time. Now I have to do some buying and I won't interfere with your business. I shall probably be ready to drive back in an hour."

"Good. I'll carry the bundles."

"I thought you had a reason for coming into town."

"I did. You!"

"Jim . . . you can be the most exasperating . . ." She looked completely confused. "Why did you do such a thing? It's downright foolish."

"What's foolish about wanting to be with you?"

"Oh really, Jim . . . It's just that you could have visited me at the castle just as easily as going through all this."

"Are you ashamed of being seen with me?" he asked blithely.

"Good heavens, no," Eve exclaimed.

"Very well. I'll explain it very simply. I've com-

petition in Elisha. He happens to have a very wealthy father who intends to run for the United States Senate next year. I have to get the jump on Elisha and keep well ahead of him."

She glanced at him with considerable interest. "I didn't know Mr. Tuttle was going to enter politics."

"You do now."

"Imagine," Eve said, considerably impressed. "He didn't mention it. Mr. Tuttle is a very modest man."

"An important one too, in this state. Now there's a man coming out of the hardware store—see him . . . the big man?"

"Yes . . ." She saw a squarely-built man with massive shoulders. He wasn't tall, but he looked like someone who possessed a great deal of strength and would enjoy using it. His face was broad, impassive, his eyes suspicious and constantly roving.

"That's Luke Barnes . . . he's Mr. Tuttle's head groom. They say he can twist the neck of a horse and kill him."

She shivered. "How horrible. He does look rather frightening."

"Right ahead, on your left, is the general store. You can buy everything you need there, and I need a few things myself."

She stopped the rig and Jim jumped down and tied the horse to a hitchrail. He assisted her down and they walked into the general store, which was very large. Three-fourths of it was filled with such basic items as bolts of cloth, rubber boots, slickers, heavy gloves and fishermen's hats. Hanging from

the ceiling were work and dress pants, lanterns, bull's-eye lamps, heavy short coats, a string of ear-laps. Behind the counter were the shelves of canned foods and alongside it the bins of flour, corn meal, beans, salt and sugar. In the meat department were hams, chickens and bacon.

The center of the store provided room for the big pot-bellied stove with a circle of hard chairs drawn around it. The menfolk apparently didn't gather this early, for the chairs were empty, but Eve imagined it would likely be a busy place most of the day.

The store also contained the post office, but there was no mail for Eve or her father. She made her purchases, and while they were being packaged and wrapped, she and Jim walked casually down the street. They passed a bakery which he highly recommended. Next to it was the barber shop. All conversation stopped in there while they ogled the young couple strolling past the window. They passed a livery stable and feed store, but it was the millinery store which caught Eve's eye. However, she resisted the temptation to purchase a hat, deciding to make do with what she had brought.

When they returned from their walk, their purchases had already been placed in the rig. He assisted Eve up into her seat, got in himself and sent the rig moving at a moderate clip out of town. She was musing on the fact that no one had spoken to him in town, yet he was able to identify most of the people who moved along the street.

"So you're going to the Tuttle shindig tomorrow night," he said, glancing at her.

She nodded. "I think it's very gracious of them to have a dinner and dance in our honor."

"Sure is," he agreed. "Kinda wish I was going."

"I wish you were too, Jim."

"Do you, really?"

"Really," she replied. Then, her voice teasing, added, "I could find out if you knew how to dance."

He chuckled. "You could at that. I might surprise you, though."

"I think you might," Eve said, laughing. "I also think we'd better be a little more decorous. The spyglasses are probably all trained on us, and I'll get a reputation for being a silly girl."

Jim laughed, but he too was aware of their constant threat and concentrated on his driving, urging the horse to greater speed.

After a while, they came to a section of road that was well protected by stands of poplars on both sides. He urged the horse over to the side of the road and pulled up on the reins. When they were stopped, he turned to face her. Without saying a word, he took her chin in his hand, turned her face to his and kissed her. It was a gentle kiss, but it bespoke his feelings, for there was a softness in his eyes as they looked into hers.

Her features softened and she felt the pounding of her heart as one of his hands closed over hers.

"I love you, Eve. I'm going to marry you."

She was startled by his declaration. "Please, Jim . . . please. This is ridiculous."

"Do you feel ridiculous?" he asked, still keeping a tight grasp of her hand.

"Oh no," she exclaimed, embarrassed because her voice was playing tricks on her. Jim's kiss had

greatly unnerved her. It had done more than that —it had made a feeling possess her she had never before experienced. She forced her hand free of his and said, "I told you before, Jim Canford, you're too brash."

"I suppose I am, but love does strange things to a man," he said soberly. "I never felt this way before. I never feel in love before. It's got me feeling a little frightened, too."

"I haven't said I loved you," Eve replied, forcing a steadiness in her voice she didn't feel. "I haven't said I'm frightened."

"No, you haven't," he admitted. "Your lips said it, though. Your eyes said it, too—until you turned away from me."

She felt color flooding her face. "Jim Canford —you . . . you're impossible."

"Ah," he sounded pleased as he urged the horse into motion, "now you're getting angry. That's a very good sign. If you didn't care a fig about me, you wouldn't bristle. And you sure look beautiful when you're angry. Just about take my breath away."

Eve sat primly in her seat, looking straight ahead, refusing to answer. Her hands were clasped tightly in her lap and she wished mightily her pounding heart would quiet. It didn't help to have him tell her how he felt. She just wished he would stop talking about it. Even if she had fallen in love with him, she wouldn't admit it to him—she wouldn't even admit it to herself. He was something of a mystery man and she wasn't going to fall in love with an enigma. At least, Elisha hadn't tried to deceive her. And she wondered what had

made her think of him at this time. Then she knew. His kiss hadn't made her heart pound, her cheeks flame, her body tremble. But at least he was honest with her and she had a feeling Jim wasn't. A feeling he was holding back something about himself.

"You'd better relax," he said, breaking into her thoughts. "We're coming onto the open road again and Mrs. Tomkins, Mrs. Frederick and Mrs. Latham will have their spyglasses on us. They'll compare notes later, so I suggest you try to be friendly or it'll be all over town we had a fight."

Eve laughed in spite of herself and Jim joined her.

"All right," she said, her voice once again light, "we'll forget what happened."

"I won't forget it," he replied, "but I promise not to kiss you again until you really want me to."

"Well, really . . ." she said, exhaling sharply.

"Now, now," he cautioned, "remember the spyglasses."

"I am." She made her voice very casual and her smile matched it. "Otherwise, I'd take the reins from you and make you walk the remainder of the way."

"I'll be good," he said, chuckling and, true to his word, he maintained a discreet silence the remainder of the way.

Professor Warren didn't appear when the rig pulled up, and when Eve went into the house, he was nowhere in sight. Somewhat anxiously, she began to call him. Jim, who'd been unloading the

supplies, suddenly jumped onto the rig again and drove it rapidly across the grass to the cliff's edge.

Eve, now frantic with worry, was startled by his sudden action. Her eyes followed him and she saw him jump off the rig, then heard him shout. Faintly, she heard her father's voice answering and her heart stopped its wild, worried beating.

Jim rode back. "He's down at the old boathouse. Looks like he found a dory in there and he's fixing her up. He says you're to come down after you change."

"Thank you, Jim. Thank you very much. Would you like to stay and accompany us to the wreck?"

He shook his head. "I'm a lobsterman, remember? I've got to go and check my traps. Do you want the lobsters I've caught to die of old age?"

She stepped closer to him. "Jim . . . I'm not angry because you kissed me."

"The question is, did you enjoy it?" he asked bluntly.

She hesitated the barest second, then said, "Yes. Please forgive me for getting angry."

"I'd forgive you if you broke a belaying pin over my fool head. I'd forgive you for anything. I'll be around."

She watched him stride away and her heart warmed. If only he would be completely honest with her and her father. Until then, she would have to have mental reservations about him. She went inside and moved swiftly up the stairs to her room.

EIGHT

Downstairs again, Eve went to the kitchen and put away the groceries and supplies. Then she ran down to the beach, using the route Jim had taught her. She joined her father as he worked on the dory he'd discovered in the boathouse.

"Have a nice trip?" he asked.

"Wonderful, Papa," she said enthusiastically.

He straightened and regarded his daughter carefully, noting her flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes. "Apparently you had a passenger."

She nodded. "Jim hitched a ride from me shortly after I left."

"Is that what made the trip to market wonderful?"

She giggled. "He's good company and he does make me laugh. He was quite a help, too. Carried everything into the castle."

"Good." Warren resumed his work.

"Papa, is the boat seaworthy? Can we row out to the wreck in it?"

"I doubt she'll sink under us. If you're ready, we may as well get started. Maybe we can find out what causes those strange blue lights."

"I hope so, because they do frighten me. Another reason I want to discover what causes them is that no one has seen them but me."

"Why didn't you invite Jim to accompany us?"

"I did, but he has to tend his lobster traps."

"So he does. I forgot. Now, let's get this craft into the water."

They shoved it down the beach to the water's edge, where Eve clambered aboard. Her father was in his bare feet with rolled-up trouser legs, so he ran the boat out before he hopped aboard and picked up the oars.

"We'll stay close to shore for a bit and watch for leaks," he said. "We've nothing to bail with."

But there were no leaks, so Warren set a course directly for the wreck. He was very good at the oars, and before long the prow of the dory thumped against the hull of the *Elizabeth B.*

Eve now had an opportunity to see how the ship had fastened itself to the reef at an angle that brought her starboard rail seaward at a considerable slant. The port rail was raised so that the deck tilted quite sharply, but was still passable. To get aboard, however, it was necessary to row around the wreck and reach it from the lower rail. She exclaimed happily when she saw the rope ladder dangling overside amidships.

Warren tied the dory to the ladder, making a firm knot. Then he pulled himself up the ladder until he crawled over the rail and stood on the pitched deck. He signaled Eve that all was well, and she made her way carefully up the ladder to be helped aboard.

It was possible to walk the deck and reach the shoreward side with ease. Now they could see what a great ship she had been. Even after almost three years of exposure to the elements, without any attention, the deck was intact and a good holy-

stoning would have made it smooth and clean again.

The great anchor chain across the bow was badly rusted, however, and so was the anchor hanging overside. But there was no need for it here. The rocks were anchor enough.

The paint had flaked, but it was still visible. As in all Blackwallers, topsides were black, the strake white. Masts and spars were black with lower masts, bowsprit, boom and gaff and doublings in white.

When her mainsail and her stunsails and flying kits had been billowed with the breeze, she must have been an eyecatching sight and as speedy as any sailing craft afloat.

"Papa, isn't she a beauty?" Eve said breathlessly.

"A beauty indeed. Jabez had reason to be proud of her."

"How many were lost when she hit the rocks?" Eve asked.

"She wasn't carrying a full crew. The rest were to be picked up at Shoodick Point. Let me see . . . the captain, two of the four regular mates were aboard. Four apprentices, a sailmaker, bos'n, engineer, a bos'n mate. No stewards or stewardesses were aboard yet. The passengers were to be picked up in Boston. Some fifteen A.B.'s, an O.S. That's all. About half her complement, but still a sad loss of life."

"Could we go below?"

"Certainly. Though it may be difficult getting down the companionway."

They climbed the deck to the door of the salon. It was a large room, amply fitted with windows,

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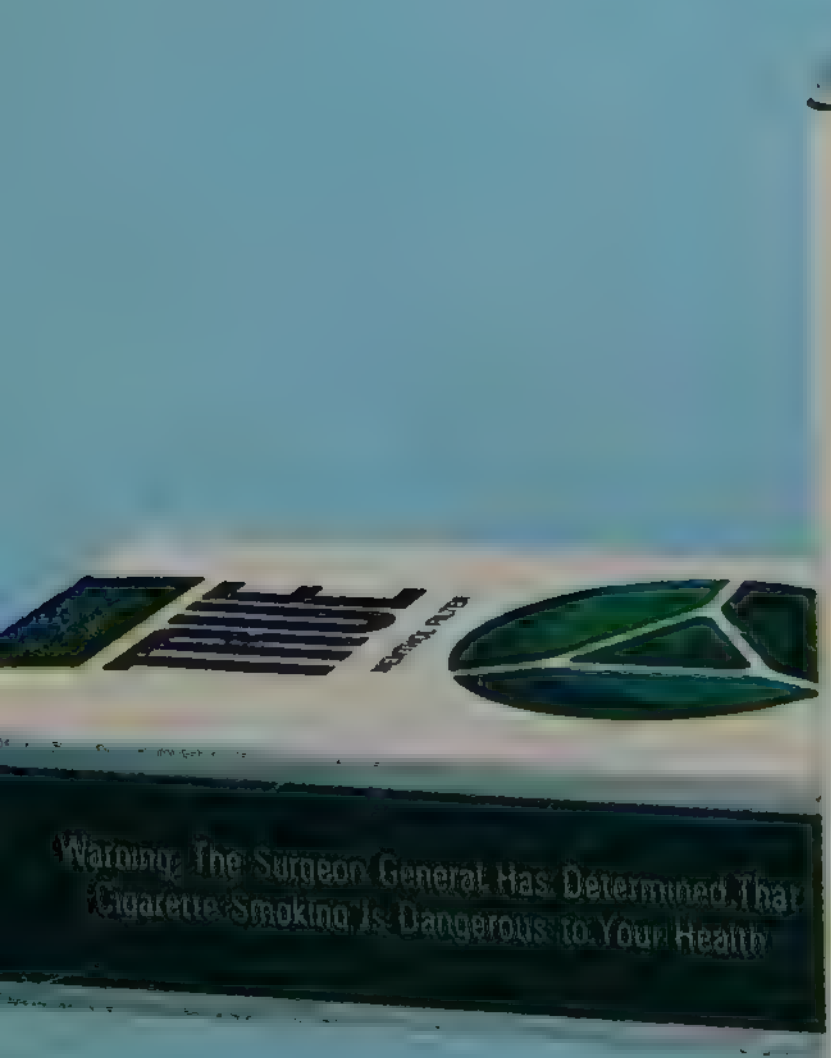

Regular: 12 mg. "tar", 0.6 mg. nicotine,
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though all the glass was knocked out. It had been quite ornate and there were still bits of gold paint which gleamed on the carved wood. A pile of debris contained enough recognizable pieces to show it was composed of what had once been dining tables and chairs, no doubt smashed during the storm and from subsequent storms, for there was no protection from the elements here. The skylight was also broken, yet bits of stained glass still lying around indicated it had probably depicted some colorful scene.

From the salon a companionway led down to the first class cabins, and they crossed toward it. At the bottom of the companionway they reached the cabins which were on either side of the narrow corridor. They stepped into one of the cabins which was about ten feet square and held two bunks. There was nothing else in it. They moved slowly along the corridor, checking each cabin, but the others were identical. If they contained any furniture, they'd been looted either by the sea or by boarders who came to salvage what they could.

Forward, they found the cabin of Jabez. A corroded brass nameplate on the door which had jammed open was proof of it. Here was an iron strong box, its door open, revealing an empty interior. Much of Jabez' furniture had been built in. His desk was still there and so were several cabinets, also empty. A large map-reading table occupied one wall of the cabin. A rusty, pot-bellied stove was close to the desk.

"This is almost like disinterring a body," Eve observed with a shudder. "There's nothing left but decay."

Warren nodded and his arm went protectingly around her shoulders. "I think we've seen enough here."

They made their way up the companionway, half slid, half walked along the slanted deck of the main salon and came out into the sunlight again. Eve shaded her eyes to look shoreward. Someone was slowly rowing a boat well off the after deck.

"Looks like Jim Canford," Warren observed.

"I thought so, too. He must be setting out to check his lobster pots."

"It's rather late in the day for that. The lobstermen are at sea before dawn, as a rule."

Eve was looking at another companionway aft. "Where could that lead to, Papa?"

"Oh, I'd say the 'tween-decks cabins. The steerage. Want to take a look?"

"We might as well, since we're aboard. I haven't found anything to account for those blue lights yet, and there has to be some reason for them."

Again they worked their way gradually down a longer companionway, this time to more dungeon-like passenger accommodations. Two hundred odd immigrants must have found these quarters very restricted.

At the end of the corridor they found yet another ladder. This one descended into the bowels of the ship, the cargo space, now one great void. Deck hatches were open and light streamed through to show the sturdy beams and construction of the ship. Eve's attention was attracted to a row of strange holes in the hull.

She made her way to it and ran an inquisitive

finger over what seemed to be a row of half-inch wide and rather deep holes in the wood. They were at measured distances from one another, and they ran the circumference of the cargo space. They were about two feet above the deck and, at intervals, were large iron rings still set into the hull.

"I wonder what those were for?" she asked.

Her father studied them with interest too. "Hard for a landlubber like me to say, but offhand I'd guess the cargoes had to be lashed down and these holes once held rings or buckles to which the lashings were attached. That's a guess, but I couldn't account for them in any other way."

"You're probably right," she said, shivering involuntarily. "Papa, it's getting chilly and I don't like it down here."

"I think we've seen all there is to see," her father said. "Nothing to attract anyone . . . what is it, Eve?"

She'd made her way over the slanted bottom to a point where four larger and much heavier rings had been attached to the hull. She stood facing them and she spread her arms outward as if to measure the distance between the two upper ones. She lowered her arms and turned around. "More of these cargo lashing rings, I suppose." She took her father's hand as if she wanted the warmth and confidence it gave her. "Let's get out of here."

They found another companionway forward to the main deck and made their way amidship to where they'd tied their boat to the ladder.

"Papa, look." Eve pointed a finger at a figure in a boat. "That *is* Jim Canford and he's still rowing around. He's not carrying any buoys or lob-

ster pots either. I don't think he's attending to his traps at all. Do you suppose he's spying on us?"

"I doubt it," Warren said kindly. "He doesn't strike me as being a man who'd spy. Down the ladder with you. Time to go ashore."

"Well, whatever he's doing, I don't particularly like it unless he explains his reasons."

Warren descended the rope ladder first to hold the boat steady for Eve. While she descended, he noticed Jim begin to row with more energy, toward shore. Eve, once she was seated in the boat, noticed too and wondered if he was going to meet them when they beached the dory, but when they reached land, he was nowhere in sight.

"Well, Papa," she said with a sigh, "we didn't solve the mystery of the blue lights."

"I'm sorry, dear," Warren said. "It might be some sort of optical illusion, you know."

"Maybe," she said, not sounding at all convinced. "I'm also wondering why Jim Canford behaved so strangely."

"How do you mean?" Warren asked, though he knew what his daughter meant.

"I invited him to investigate the ship with us. He excused himself, pleading work. Yet he hovered in sight of the wreck as long as we were on it. When we left, he could easily have rowed over to us, yet he got out of our sight as fast as possible."

Warren detected a mixture of irritation and hurt in his daughter's voice. "Don't let it upset you. He probably thought a couple of landlubbers like us might panic when we got on the ship and would call for help. He might even have thought we'd

fall off the ladder and he'd have to dive in to rescue us."

Eve's eyes brimmed with gratitude. "Thank you for saying that, Papa, even if you don't really believe it. You know, I've grown very fond of Jim."

"I know, my dear, so don't judge him until he's had a chance to explain."

"I guess there's really nothing for him to explain. After all, he has a perfect right to go where he wishes."

"Yes, he does," Warren agreed. "And I have the upstairs corridor to sweep. What are you going to do?"

"I'm going to bake two pies and make fricassee chicken for supper, plus hot biscuits. If there's time after that, I'm going to seek out Aunt Elizabeth's room. Look through her possessions. Try to visualize the type of person she was."

"Should be interesting. Let's get at it."

However, Eve didn't find the time to look for her aunt's room, but made up her mind to do it the following day. For some reason, she wanted to know something about her. To be able to talk about her to Mrs. Tuttle. Surely she had become acquainted with Elizabeth.

At supper, Eve said, "Papa, know what I think caused those blue lights?"

"No. But I think it was nothing more than a trick of moonlight."

"I don't. I believe someone's aboard that ship. Perhaps not all the time, but somebody goes there and carries some sort of blue light."

"Eve," Warren argued patiently, "there's no reason why anybody would want to visit the wreck. It's been thoroughly stripped clean and there's nothing out there to interest anybody."

"Just the same, I'd like to row out again, the moment we see the blue lights."

"And if we find nothing then?"

"I'll give up and put it all down to some strange trick of moonlight, as you say."

"All right, you've made a bargain. We'll watch for the blue lights. The dory is ready to be put into the water at a moment's notice. We'll row out with all possible speed and board the wreck."

"Thank you, Papa."

"But remember," Warren cautioned, "if we find nothing, you're to forget the whole thing. Agreed?"

"Yes, Papa. Then all we'll have to do is find out who comes and goes from the tower at will and how they do it."

Warren chuckled. "The answer to that will probably be just as logical as the one about the blue lights. Now let's do up these dishes so we can watch for anyone aboard the wreck. I want this mystery settled as much as you."

By the time they had the kitchen in order, it had grown dark. They carried oil lamps upstairs to Eve's room, but left the rest of the castle in darkness. Eve took up a position at one of the windows, Warren stood watch at the other.

"Papa," she said, "what if we can't find a buyer for the castle?"

"I don't know. We'll just have to forget it, I guess."

"That would be a shameful waste. People from Boston and New York are beginning to spend summers in Maine. Not this far north, perhaps, because there's so little to draw them. If they had a chance to live in an authentic castle. . . ."

"What in the world are you thinking of? Setting up a hotel?"

She nodded eagerly. "Why not? It wouldn't cost much and there's certainly enough room. I'll bet we could fill the place all summer long."

Warren nodded slowly. "It's an idea. See here, I have a sabbatical year I can take whenever I like. So I'll make it this year. Yes . . . it's a great idea. Trying to sell this as a private dwelling is going to be impossible. If we start it as a hotel, then selling it might be easy."

"And much more profitable," she added. She turned for a look out of the window in the direction of the wreck. "Papa, would it be all right if I blew out the lamps?"

"If you wish. Do you believe they'll come sooner if the castle is dark?"

"Yes. They'll think we went to bed early. Oh, I'm probably being very foolish, but now that we've decided to try and do something with the castle, I don't want anything to be frightening me every night I look out over the sea."

Warren extinguished the lamps. Eve opened the window for a better view, but she closed it again. The onshore wind was cold and clammy and the moon, which had bathed the wreck with light, was absent tonight.

About half an hour went by when she cried out, "There's a light, Papa. A blue light."

"I see it," Warren said tersely.

The light hovered above the deck, visible one instant, gone the next. Then there seemed to be two of the lights, flitting and bobbing along like the luminescent wake of a ghost.

"Come on," he said, picking up the lanterns. "I know better than to ask you to stay here, so we'll both go. We'll take the lamps, but we won't light them 'til we get on deck."

"All right, Papa."

Downstairs, Warren said, "Just one minute."

He went to the kitchen and returned, carrying a short, heavy club. "I made this," he said. "At least, we have some sort of weapon."

They left the castle, ran down the path to the gravel strip and continued on until they reached the beach at the point.

They placed the lamps in the dory, dragged it to the water's edge and pushed it in. Eve was heedless of the fact that her shoes and dress got wet. Her heart was pounding, not so much from her exertions, but at what might be awaiting them on board the wreck.

Warren rowed well, and in no time they were beginning to round the ship. Eve looked skyward, hoping for at least the twinkling of the stars, but the sky was black.

"There's no moon," she said. "Hasn't been one tonight, so we can't attribute the lights to any reflection."

"That's true." Warren reached for the ladder

and tied the dory carefully. "Don't come up until I signal you with the lantern."

He scrambled up the ladder, the club thrust down under his waistband, the lantern linked over his arm. On board, he pulled the club free, surveyed the deck carefully, but saw no one. He squatted down, lit his lantern and motioned to Eve with it. She climbed up as fast as her wet skirts, clinging to her legs, would allow. She slipped the lantern from her arm, handed it to her father and slid over the rail.

She looked around, saw no one. "Do you suppose whoever it was already left the ship?"

"I don't know, but we're going to search this ship from one end to the other."

Warren was busying himself lighting Eve's lamp. There was a rather heavy wind coming in from the sea so he had to turn his back on it to shield the flame. The lanterns, their light intensified by reflectors, illuminated the deck well and they both felt easier.

Moving as quickly as possible, they went from stem to stern without finding a trace of anyone having been there. Then they entered the salon, continuing the inspection that proved just as fruitless.

"If there's anybody aboard, they must be either 'tween decks or in the hold," Warren said. "And they must have been here all along, even this afternoon when we searched the ship, or they were put aboard by someone who rowed the boat away in the darkness. There was no boat tied to this wreck."

"I know, Papa. I looked too. Besides, you had to row around the wreck to reach the ladder. Do you think someone is aboard?"

"That's what we're here to find out," Warren said, keeping the concern he felt out of his voice. "Are you sure you want to continue the search?"

"Quite sure, Papa," Eve said stoutly. The pounding of her heart was all that betrayed her fear.

"Then let's search the cabins next. After that, the hold."

They made their way down the companionway to the first-class cabins, stepped into each one and aimed their lamps at the shadows, throwing light into every corner. They gave the cabin Jabez used an even more careful study. Nothing had changed. Everything was as it had been that afternoon. The only sound was the hollow echo of their footsteps. They returned to the deck and made their way toward the companionway to the 'tween decks cabins. Eve grasped her father's arm tightly.

"Look . . . at the point," she said.

Warren peered in that direction and saw a small yellow light swinging in the darkness. Someone was standing at the point, obviously using the lantern as a signal. The moonless, starless night made visibility impossible, making the identity of the person unknown. Then, quite abruptly, the light vanished as if it had been hastily blown out.

"There's something going on that I don't like," Warren said grimly. "And it's not the work of ghosts."

Eve didn't answer him. She stood transfixed,

staring at the castle. As the light at the point went out, another in the tower room appeared. Terror froze her voice, but she released her grip on her father's arm and pointed.

"Don't be frightened," Warren said, keeping his voice calm. "It's quite apparent someone is trying to terrorize us."

"Someone just lit a lamp there," she said. "It was dark a moment ago."

The light in the tower was blotted out for a moment, then reappeared. "That same someone just passed in front of the lamp," Warren said. "There . . . again . . . did you see it blotted out a second time?"

"Papa, I'm frightened." Eve's voice was a mere whisper.

"I don't blame you. There's an answer to it, though. However, we came here to find out what caused the blue lights aboard this wreck and that's what we'll do first. Then we're going to find out who was signaling from the point. After that, we'll return to see who is in the tower room. That is, if the intruder waits for our return."

"I have a feeling the telescope is trained on us," Eve said forlornly. "Could we be seen in this darkness?"

"So long as we have the lanterns lit—yes."

"Papa, could it be a ghost?"

"Certainly not. There—the figure just passed in front of the lamp again, blotting out its light. In the first place, a ghost wouldn't need a light, and if it passed in front of one, the light would still be visible. If you believe in ghosts, that is. I don't."

"Papa, the light just went out."

"So it did," Warren replied, staring at the now-darkened tower room.

"Do you suppose whoever it was knew we saw the light and put it out?"

"It's possible. Do you still have the courage to inspect the rest of the ship?"

"Of course," Eve replied, not at all certain she did have. A growing feeling of fear crept through her. She cried out, "Who could it be, Papa? How does he get in and out of the castle? You locked the door before we left."

"He might have another key," Warren suggested, "though I doubt it. We've never heard anyone prowl the corridors."

"Then how does he get in?" Eve repeated her question.

Warren couldn't answer that. There could certainly be no secret passage to the tower room. It was surrounded by windows. He'd already checked the floor. It was solid, firm, with no loose boards or hidden trapdoor.

He placed an arm around her. "Perhaps we'd better go back. You're too frightened to continue the search and you needn't be ashamed of it."

She rested her head against his shoulder for a moment, let her body relax. "No, Papa. I'm staying with you and we'll continue our search of this ship."

"Very well," he acquiesced. "But I don't like to see you upset this way."

"I'll be all right, Papa. Really I will."

"Then let's go."

He guided her across the deck and they went down to the steerage. Here they only had to spend

a few minutes, for the cabins were large, accommodating at least twenty, and there were not many of them. They made their way to the hold, finally, where the lanterns lit only a portion of the vast space. Its darkness seemed to overwhelm them.

Warren grasped Eve's wrist, brought her to a halt. They stood there listening. There wasn't a sound. The hold seemed suddenly clammy and damp. Then they noticed they couldn't hear the surf plainly any more. It was as if a great blanket of some kind had come down over the sea to smother the sound of the waves against the rocks. It almost seemed as if something evil was going to spring out of the darkness at them. Eve felt her father's hand, gripping her wrist, grow moist with perspiration. He was as terrified as she.

An unexpected noise, someone suddenly appearing, almost anything would have been better than this absolute silence. Even the air itself seemed to have changed. Their steps, as they moved, seemed to be partly smothered. It was like nothing Warren had ever experienced before. It was as if something was all around them, closing in on them. Eve almost gave way to an urge to run. Where to, she didn't know. Aboard a ship beached on the rocks, there isn't much to run to. And what would she be running from? That was the cause of their fear. They didn't know.

Warren said quietly, "Come on," and Eve dutifully moved along with him.

They climbed the companionway. For a moment they both thought someone had sealed them into the hold because they couldn't see through the hatch. Something had closed it off. Warren

raised the lantern, pointed its reflector straight ahead.

A gray mass of filmy substance came filtering down the companionway toward them. Warren's throat went dry, the blood seemed to freeze in his veins.

Eve screamed and clung to her father.

"It's all right. It's all right, Eve," Warren said firmly. "It's only fog."

"Oh, thank God," she cried in sudden relief. "Of course . . . of course. It's one of those fog banks."

Warren leaned weakly against the hand rail. "So it is. Quite a relief. I don't mind telling you I was scared stiff and had been since we entered the hold. The fog clinched it."

As relief flooded through them, the weakness caused by fear left them and they returned to the deck. The fog had enclosed everything. It had swept in from the sea like a great cloud and settled over the ship and the shore, a vast gray blanket, shutting out sound and sight.

"This is bad," Warren said, "but it could get even worse. We'd better get back to shore as fast as possible. If it gets any thicker, I won't know what direction I'm rowing in."

Eve felt a wave of relief flood through her at the thought of leaving the wreck. They made their way to the ladder and Warren prepared to descend. He slipped the lantern over his arm, disposed of the club under his waistband again. He wanted to go down the ladder first so he could steady the boat for Eve. He lowered himself rung by rung and at the bottom his foot sought the dory

he'd tied there. Suddenly, he realized the bottom of the ladder swung free. His foot couldn't find the dory. He lowered himself as far down as he could get, held the lamp near the water, moved it in every direction, seeking the boat. It was gone!

It was impossible that it had broken free, for he'd tied it very firmly. The sea was calm, so the dory could not have been buffeted about to get loose. But the fact remained that it was not there. He climbed the ladder again, swung himself onto the deck and the cold seeped into his bones.

Eve stared at him in amazement.

"Boat's gone," he said laconically.

"Papa . . . I saw you tie it. . . ."

"I know. There's only one answer. Somebody untied it and set it adrift."

Eve leaned weakly against the rail. "What will happen next?" she asked, despair edging her voice. "Mysterious lights on the ship, at the point, in the tower room . . . and now the dory's gone . . ."

NINE

They made their way forward, to what was left of the bridge. It offered little protection and the fog swirled all around them, penetratingly chill. The shore and the sea had been swallowed up in it.

"Papa," Eve said, "do you think I could swim ashore?"

His reply was prompt. "I wouldn't think of letting you, my dear. The water this far north is ice cold, even at this time of year. Even if it were not, it's a long swim and in this fog you'd go off course, need more time and strength. You wouldn't have it. No . . . there'll be no swimming."

"But if we stay here, we'll freeze to death," she complained. "There's no telling how long the fog will last."

"That's true, but we have to take our chances. If it becomes necessary, we'll break up some wood and make a fire in the stove in Jabez's cabin. We won't freeze."

"Do we just stay here until tomorrow? Until the fog lifts?"

"What else can we do?"

"Somebody's trying to harm us, Papa, and I wonder why."

"Harm us or scare us. I'm sure it's not coincidence."

She clung to his arm. "Whoever it is . . . *whatever* it is . . . doesn't care if we die. We very well could out here in this cold and fog. Maybe it was meant we should take sick with cold."

"We won't. We may not be comfortable, but we'll get through the night."

Eve gave a start of excitement. "Papa . . . listen. . . ."

He cocked his head slightly as his ears picked up the faint sound of oars. He set the lantern on the deck, took a firmer grip on the club and made up his mind to buy a gun as soon as possible.

Then the sound was gone. Neither he nor Eve dared to whisper. They simply listened, almost

without breathing, in a cold sweat of apprehension. It was impossible to penetrate the fog. Even the sounds of the oars were so muffled they could only be heard at close range, and the fog also masked the direction of the boat. To call out might be dangerous. Whoever it was might be the person who wanted to harm them. It was better to remain silent and wait.

Then they heard the muffled bump of a boat against the hull, just below the ladder. The bump came again, followed by the sound of oars shipped and placed inside the craft.

"Anybody up there?" a voice called out. It was too fog-smothered to be recognizable.

"Who are you?" Warren called back loudly.

"Professor? Are you all right? Is Eve with you? It's Jim Canford."

Warren heaved a sigh of relief. "Come on up, Jim. We're glad to know it's you."

Jim scrambled up the ladder, climbed overside and stood facing them. "I went to the castle to pay you a visit, but no one was at home. I hurried down to the point and found the dory gone so I figured you must be out here."

"Someone untied our boat," Eve said, "and set it adrift."

"It wasn't untied," Jim told her. "The rope was cut. Part of it is still tied to the ladder. Any idea who did this?"

"No . . . not even a vague suspicion," Warren said.

"How did it happen you knew we were aboard, Jim?" Eve said coldly. "Just because we weren't home . . ."

"Now, Eve, I already told you," he interrupted. "You were not at the castle, the dory was missing. I didn't think you and your father would go fishing at night. The only other place to come to would be the wreck, so I rowed out for a look."

"Did you carry a lighted lantern on the point?" she asked.

"I don't have a lantern. At least, not one with me."

"We both saw such a light," Warren said. "And there were some strange blue lights aboard this craft, which was what brought us out here in the first place."

"Find anything?"

"Nothing. Nor could we account for the lights."

Eve spoke up. "Someone also lit a lamp in the tower room at the castle. May I ask if it was you?"

"Now see here, my suspicious miss, I just found you and your father gone so I used my head and rowed out. It's a good thing I did because some of these fogs don't lift for two days and by that time you'd have frozen to death. Now I want to take you off and all you do is ask questions with the most suspicious tinge in your voice."

Eve's manner softened. "I'm sorry. Papa and I have been through so much here tonight . . . well . . . I was wrong. We're very grateful you did row out to find us."

"I'll go down first," he said. He took Eve's lantern, swung it over his arm, went overside and descended the ladder.

Eve waited until she heard his voice order her to follow. When she reached the bottom rung, his hands found her waist, and lifted her aboard with-

out the slightest effort, releasing her promptly when she was safe.

"Thank you very much," she said. For a moment she swayed with the bobbing craft and his arms tightened around her again until she was drawn close to him. Her arms tightened around his neck and for a moment she thought he was going to kiss her, and she anticipated the thrill of it.

Instead, he released her and said, "You'd best be seated. I have to lend your papa a hand."

She felt rebuffed and embarrassed and was grateful for the fog which made the lantern's light so dim that their faces were scarcely visible. A moment later her father was seated beside her and Jim manned the oars. He rowed straight out into the fog bank and without the slightest hesitation brought the lobster boat to the point where he ran it up on the sand. He jumped out, hauled it clear of the water and then helped Eve ashore.

He made the fluke fast, took one lamp and guided Eve up the path leading to the castle. Her father followed. The fog was still thick, but Jim moved as if he was familiar with every inch of the way. Eve was grateful, for the lanterns were of little help. Not even the castle was visible, and they weren't even aware they'd reached it until Jim paused.

At the door he said, "Better get something warm into you. I'll call back again when I can."

"We're deeply indebted." Warren offered him his hand. "Thank heaven for the hunch that sent you out to the ship."

Jim nodded. "Good night, Eve."

"Good night," she replied curtly. She was still

smarting from embarrassment because he hadn't kissed her when he undoubtedly knew she'd expected him to.

If Jim noticed, he gave no evidence of it, for he turned and was swallowed up in the fog.

"Better get inside, Eve," Warren spoke softly, noting her preoccupation, knowing she wasn't even aware he was holding the door open for her.

She turned slowly, almost reluctantly, and entered the castle. Warren started a fire in the kitchen stove, and she put some chowder on the back of the stove to warm. Then she picked up her lantern and followed her father. There was no need for them to discuss what they were going to do—a search of the castle was inevitable.

They searched the first floor, sending the light rays into the shadows, but their efforts proved fruitless. Upstairs they met with the same lack of success. Finally, they climbed the stairs to the tower room. Warren found the door open. He stepped into the room, followed by Eve. There was certainly no one in here. He set his lantern on the desk.

Eve put hers alongside and went immediately to the telescope and peered through it. She couldn't see anything because of the fog, but she was sure it was pointed at the wreck and whoever had used it had been here before the fog bank had come in.

She sniffed the air in the room. Then she walked quickly to the large desk. Jabez's meerschaum lay in the center of it. She felt of the bowl and found it slightly warm.

"Papa," she said in a tension-filled voice, "this must be Uncle Jabez's pipe. I saw it in the drawer

of his desk last night. Now it's on top of the desk and it's been smoked. You can smell the tobacco and the pipe is still warm."

Warren felt of it and nodded. "Yes . . . it was used not very long ago."

"And it is Uncle Jabez's pipe?"

"He was never without one." Warren sat down slowly, impressed with the enormity of this new situation.

Eve expressed it in words. "Do you think Uncle Jabez . . . is alive?"

Warren sat down in his brother's black leather chair. "I don't know. If all the others drowned, he must have too, though miracles do happen. But if he is alive, why doesn't he show himself, tell us what he's up to and what really happened?"

"Perhaps he's afraid to," Eve ventured.

"Your Uncle Jabez afraid?" Warren scoffed. "Never."

"Perhaps he has to remain hidden because the person who is trying to frighten us wants to do him harm."

"My dear, we're guessing. They never found anyone from the *Elizabeth B*. But anything is possible and Jabez might be alive, with a mighty good reason for not coming forth."

"Unless . . ." Eve hesitated over the words, "it is a ghost."

Warren shook his head. "If Jabez is dead and his ghost is abroad, he wouldn't be making trouble for us. He'd haunt those responsible for the destruction of his ship. But there again, all proof points to the elements having wrecked his vessel."

"He might be trying to tell us something."

"No . . . I won't believe that. I don't profess to understand what's going on, but I refuse to believe it's been done by any supernatural powers. I suggest we return to the kitchen and have a dish of that chowder which should be hot by now. Then to bed and get all the rest we possibly can. If we're to go to the Tuttle affair tomorrow evening, I don't want my beautiful daughter to attend with dark circles beneath her eyes."

Eve nodded agreement, suddenly too tired to talk. They went directly to the kitchen and ate their chowder in silence, but its heat and refreshing flavor sent warmth through their bodies and relaxed them.

They stacked their dishes in the sink, then returned upstairs. Eve kissed her father good night, entered her room and closed the door. She looked longingly at the fireplace, stacked with wood and ready for lighting, but decided against it. She did want to look her best for the dinner and dance which she was anticipating with pleasure. She was also looking forward to seeing Elisha again. She knew she wouldn't be thinking of Elisha if Jim had kissed her, but she was still annoyed with him though she knew her attitude was silly.

She undressed, prepared herself for bed and put on the flannel nightdress. She slipped between the cold bedclothes, left the lamp at her bedside on and curled up, not stirring until the bed grew warmer.

Her mind catalogued what had occurred tonight. The blue lights again appearing on the wreck, the mysterious person at the point who carried a lantern and signaled with it, the disap-

pearance of the dory cut from the ladder after it had been securely tied up, these obviously were attempts to frighten her and her father away. But who would light and smoke the pipe of a dead man? Who could come and go at will in this castle without being seen? Who maintained a watch over the wreck through Jabez's telescope? It seemed that each day brought a new problem—one that would have to be solved if they expected to convert this white elephant into a hotel. Certainly no one would care to vacation in a castle that had the reputation of being haunted, or look out on a wreck that gave off unexplainable blue lights.

She heard her father move up to the door and speak her name.

"I'm all right, Papa," she called out to him.

"Good night," he said. "Everything's secure."

"Good night, Papa."

Now that her body had warmed the bed, she stretched out, blew out the lamp and snuggled down under the covers. She wanted to look her best tomorrow evening. The Tuttles were important people, very generous, warmhearted people and she was looking forward to meeting their friends. Therefore, rest was important.

However, she couldn't resist looking over at the fog-shrouded windows. The fog made the silence heavy and depressing. She thought of Jim out there in it. Jim, so competent and kind, yet she couldn't help but be suspicious of him. He had appeared very opportunely tonight—luckily for them—also, he'd hovered around the vicinity of the wreck this afternoon while they were aboard it.

Yet, despite her suspicions, thinking of him sent a glow of warmth through her and she soon dropped off to sleep.

Sunlight, streaming into the room, bathing her in its morning radiance, wakened her early. She stretched lazily, then sat bolt upright as the events of the night before returned to mind, but her fears were swept away as she saw every vestige of fog gone. The brilliant day almost made the events of the night seem unreal and she was determined to push them out of her mind, for she was eagerly looking forward to the evening with the Tuttles and their friends.

She slipped out of bed and went to the window. Her father was visible, down at the point, hauling the dory onto the beach. She dressed quickly and hurried to the kitchen. There were no signs of his having made breakfast, so she stirred up batter for hotcakes after making sure she'd remembered to buy a tin of that local maple syrup. She placed strips of bacon on the spider, stirred up the fire a little, cooked the bacon slowly until she heard her father enter the castle. Then she spooned on the batter and got half a dozen large cakes bubbling.

The coffee was already at the boil, and she pushed the pot to the back of the stove to simmer. In five more minutes they sat down to a hearty breakfast, which they resolved would last them until the evening.

"I spotted the dory drifting near shore," her father explained, "so I waded out and brought her back. Jim was right too—the rope had been cut with a knife."

"Papa," Eve said, "I'm not going to worry about ghosts, Uncle Jabez, derelict ships or blue lights. I'm going to spend the day getting ready for the party. First, though, I'm going to bake a blueberry pie and take it to Jim Canford. It's the best way I know of showing our appreciation for what he did for us last night."

"A good idea. I like Jim and somehow I trust him. But then I trust everybody, so don't go by me. Tell him that he's welcome here any time he wishes to come by."

"I will, Papa. Now don't you work so hard you won't enjoy the party tonight. If we're going to convert this castle into a summer hotel, we're going to need the good will of as many people hereabouts as possible."

Warren nodded. "I spent half the night thinking about it, and the more thought I gave to it, the better the idea sounds. Perhaps the real reason behind my enthusiasm is the fact that I like it here so much I don't want to go back to Boston. But we'll see. I have this sabbatical year, and in that time we'll find out how much we enjoy the east coast of Maine and castle life."

"Don't forget though, Papa," Eve cautioned, "we have to solve the mystery of this castle before we can have guests here."

"We will," he assured her.

He picked up some tools and left the kitchen while Eve busied herself with the pie. She worked deftly and with assurance, and in no time the pie was in the oven. She went upstairs to get a shawl, but she had time to kill until the pie was baked so she sought out her aunt's room.

She found it at the very end of the long corridor, next to the linen closet. The bedroom was similar to the others, but adjoining it was a sitting room. There were only a few pieces of furniture, all protected with dust covers. She lifted the cover off a chaise longue and exclaimed in delight. It was tufted and covered with pink satin. She moved to a chair, uncovered that and found it similarly upholstered. She discovered a writing desk and looked through the drawers, sighing when she found they were empty. Sometimes those desks had secret compartments and she wished she had the time to search for one—it might reveal something interesting.

She moved on to a door and opened it, revealing a large closet, the walls of which were lined with clothes. They too were covered, but Eve gently lifted the covers and exclaimed rapturously over the beautiful gowns and dresses.

Her brow furrowed in thought as she recalled Elisha telling her that her aunt wasn't very social. It seemed strange, in view of such a large wardrobe which seemed like that of a woman who would love to entertain and to go to social functions. Eve wondered if her aunt might not have died of loneliness rather than as the result of a severe Maine winter. She thought that if she ever had so many clothes and no place to wear them, she'd wither and die. But other than the wardrobe, there was nothing visible in the rooms to reveal the personality of Elizabeth Warren, wife of Jabez Warren. Again, Eve felt a pang of regret at never having met her. However, there was no further time to dwell on nostalgia, so she returned to the

kitchen where the sweet fragrance filling the air told her the pie was done.

She removed it from the oven and placed it in a covered pan with handles which made it easy to carry. She left the castle and made her way to the north shore. A mild breeze played with her skirts and she breathed deeply of the sea air, savoring its tangy fragrance. She hadn't proceeded too far before she saw the dwelling. It was the only one in sight and it stood about a quarter of a mile back from the beach, on a little knoll overlooking the sea. The sandy beach reached all the way to the doorstep. All stone and boulders had long since been cleared away, and the beach obviously was kept cleared whenever the sea brought in more.

It was a fairly large house, painted white, and not long ago because the elements had not yet wrought their havoc with the color. The windows gleamed with cleanliness and fresh curtains adorned each. Piles of buoys and lobster pots were handy alongside the house and there was a large net drying in the sun.

She had no idea if Jim was at home, but she could leave the pie outside his door if he wasn't. However, he certainly didn't seem to keep the usual hours of a lobsterman. As she approached the door, it opened, and Jim, in white canvas trousers, house slippers and an old turtle-neck sweater, stepped out to greet her.

His grin was wide as he said, "Darned if you didn't bring me something." He took the pan from her and pushed the door wide. "Come on in."

"It's about time we did something for you," Eve

said. "You've cooked for us, driven me into town, rescued us . . . and rescued me from the sedge, too."

"That's how we got acquainted," he reminded her. "I'm mighty grateful for it."

He set the pan on a table in the hall and lifted the cover. The steamy fragrance of the pie teased his nostrils.

"Ummm," he said appreciatively. "I'll eat that all at one sitting."

"I hope so," Eve said, with feigned archness. "Otherwise, I'll think you don't like my cooking."

"I'm sure I will, ma'am," he teased, "though I haven't had any yet except your coffee, which was mighty good." He smiled and added, "Come on into the parlor."

They entered a large room which was dominated by a fireplace over which were modest paintings of a man and a woman. Jim resembled them both, she thought. Beside the fireplace were two rocking chairs, padded, with soft arm rests tied in place. A large round rag carpet of a multitude of colors gave a great deal of life to the room. The Franklin stove sat sedately in the farther corner, and not far from it was the maroon mohair sofa, with cushions covered by embroidery in a rustic cabin design. There was a large round table decorated with a green velvet cloth edged with white ball trim. Drawn rugs covered parts of the floor where the oval rug didn't reach, and sun streamed in the windows, adding to its cheeriness.

It was one of the pleasantest rooms Eve had seen.

"Some shack," she said derisively. "And that's what you told me it was, Jim."

He grinned from ear to ear, pleased by her compliment. "Can't take any credit myself. Belongs to a friend of mine. I just live here."

"You keep it up too, that's easy to see. May I sit down?"

He hastily moved to a rocker and held it steady for her. Then he sat down in the one opposite.

"Are you warm enough? I can light the fireplace or the stove or both. . . ."

"I'm very comfortable. I came by to thank you again for rescuing us. I'm afraid I didn't seem properly appreciative last night."

"Now it wasn't as much as that," he said. "How was everything in the castle? I mean—after the scare you had, then going back there. It's so big and lonely."

"Yes, it is," she agreed. "If you promise not to laugh at me, I'll tell you what we found."

"Not likely I'll laugh," he said. "Not after last night. I saw the cut rope."

"We left no lights on in the tower room or anywhere in the castle, but while we were on the wreck, someone entered the tower room and lit one of the lamps. That same person used the telescope and . . . the room smelled of tobacco smoke from a pipe that lay on the desk where it had not been when I left the room last. It was still warm, and it was a pipe that obviously belonged to my Uncle Jabez. I had seen it in the drawer the day before."

Jim sat up, his brow furrowed thoughtfully. "Hold on now. Maybe your papa smoked it."

"No, he didn't. He'd not even seen it before, but he knew that was the type of pipe my Uncle Jabez smoked. Besides, the smell was of freshly smoked tobacco. I know because at Harvard most of the boys smoke a pipe. I've smelled every brand of tobacco made."

"Are you trying to tell me Jabez is not dead?"

"I told you what happened. I can't speculate on it because . . . well . . . I believe my Uncle Jabez is dead. We're sure of it, my father and I, but possibly somebody wants us to think he's not."

"Who'd want to do that and why?"

"Who'd slip into the tower room to use the telescope to study the wreck? Who'd be carrying blue lights aboard the derelict? Who'd stand on the point and signal with a lantern? None of it makes much sense, Jim, but it's leading up to something big, I'm afraid. There's some secret to that castle and to the wrecking of the *Elizabeth B*."

"You make it sound as if there is," he mused. "You and your pa still going to stay?"

"We're not only going to stay, we're going to try to turn the castle into a hotel for summer folks. Try to get rich people from Boston, New York and Philadelphia to come and spend the summer in a real castle."

"Good heavens," he gasped. "What an idea! Summer people are only beginning to come to Bar Harbor and Bangor. This is quite far north, don't you think?"

"Not too far when there's a genuine castle to vacation in. And a fine beach to sun themselves and boats and fresh lobsters and clams . . ." she broke off, eying Jim meaningly.

"Might work," he said. "Just might. Maybe I'll ask for a job supplying lobsters and clams and fresh fish."

"The job is yours," she said, then added, "if you're serious."

"Don't you think I am?"

"I'm not sure. I'm not sure of you at all, Jim."

The seriousness of her voice made him frown. "Why not?"

"How did you really come to row out to the wreck last night? Just because we weren't in the castle is no reason to believe we'd be out on the ship in a thick pea-soup fog like that. There must have been some other reason that made you sure we were there."

He smiled sheepishly. "There was. I'd gone down to the point about sunset, hoping you might come along, and I fell asleep. I didn't wake up until just before the fog rolled in. I saw it like a dark wall, coming from the sea, and I also saw the lights of lanterns on deck. I did check and found your dory missing. Took me a little while to get back to my boat and I had a whale of a time finding the hulk in the fog. If I hadn't found it, I'd probably have rowed my heart out all night long because I'd never have been able to go back without knowing you were safe."

There was warmth in her eyes when she looked at him now. "Oh, Jim . . . thanks for telling me."

"I could tell you more, Eve."

"I'm listening."

"I wanted to kiss you last night when I lifted you into my boat."

"Why didn't you?"

He shifted his feet, his elbows, his whole body. He looked somewhere to the left of her. "Well now, I don't know. Maybe I thought you didn't want me to."

"What made you think that?"

"Eve, you know you don't completely trust me."

"Did I say that?"

"You don't have to say it. I sense it. Anyway, your pa was coming down the ladder."

She smiled. "I don't think that would have stopped you."

"Doggone it," he said loudly and vehemently, "if I kissed you every time I thought about it, I'd likely never stop. Doggone it, Eve, I wanted to kiss you so bad . . ."

She stood up. "Go on."

He arose and moved over to her. "Oh, Eve . . . all this talking . . ."

His arms went around her waist and drew her close, and this time their lips met. Her arms moved up and around his neck and they held the embrace until her head swam. When they finally stepped back, Eve looked up at him, her eyes starry with wonderment.

"Doggone," Jim said huskily.

She nodded. "You're so right, Jim. Isn't it wonderful?"

"Sure is," he said, then frowned darkly. "I don't know, though . . . what have I got to offer you, anyway?"

She smiled and let her fingers touch his cheek, caressing it lightly. "Yourself. That's all I want."

"You'd be satisfied with a lobsterman?"

"Yes . . . with just a lobsterman—provided he's you."

He broke the spell deliberately. "You know what you're after, Miss? You're just insuring the fact that your new hotel will get a steady supply of fresh lobsters. I been out with women before. I know the way they think. . . . I'm smart. Durn right, I'm smart."

She burst out laughing. "You know something? Papa says you're much more than a lobsterman and I think he can prove it. Durn right he can, so you might as well own up now."

He moved away, turned his back on her. "That's all I am, Eve. All I own is a fluke, some buoys and a few lobster pots. I've nothing to offer you."

"Did I ask for anything, Jim?"

"No . . . but your friends aren't like me. They're probably important people—like the Tuttles . . . and the folks you'll meet at the party tonight. Now how can I compare with them?"

"I have no intention of comparing you with them," she said stoutly. "To me, you're much more important than any of them. But there is something you can offer me."

He turned and moved up to her. "Name it."

"Your trust. If you're here for some reason other than lobstering, tell me what it is. Let me share your secret If you're in trouble, let me help you. I'm just brazen enough, or maybe desperate enough to tell you I've fallen in love with you, so I have a right to ask these things."

He moved away from her and his face became set. "No . . . no, Eve. It's not possible. And as

for love . . . I'm not in any position to tell you I love you. I do . . . of course I do . . . but I can't say it and ask you to marry me. I won't say it until I can."

In spite of what he'd just told her, she wanted to go to him and kiss him madly, passionately. He loved her. He'd said so. But he wouldn't declare his love until he was free to ask her hand in marriage.

"I'll wait," she said in a steady voice.

"It . . . may not happen. It . . . there's a possibility it never can."

"You're Yale, aren't you?" she asked unexpectedly. It was foolish, switching the subject like that, but the thought had suddenly occurred to her.

By the quick reddening of his face, she knew she was right. He took her gently by the shoulders.

"Eve, I wouldn't do anything to hurt you no matter what happens. I can't tell you what this is about—not yet. Some day I promise that I will, no matter how it turns out. You may not even want to be in love with me after that. Nothing is sure, nothing's certain; I'm living on surmises and suspicions. But I have to go through with it no matter who get hurt . . . except you. Except you, Eve. Now clear out so a man can go about getting ready to harvest his lobster pots."

"You're about five hours late," she reminded him.

"I know . . . it's like that all the time. The other lobstermen laugh their heads off at me. They

think I'm lazy, and I have to let them go on thinking that."

She rose on tiptoe and touched her cheek to his. "Whatever is troubling you, you'll share it with me someday, Jim. It has to be that way with us. No secrets, nothing held back. I know that whatever you're doing is right. It couldn't be otherwise, so I'll wait."

He closed his eyes and shook his head. "Drat it!" he exploded. "Why'd you have to happen along?"

"I just got trapped in a sedge patch, remember?"

He laughed then. "Before that I hated the stuff, wanted to pull it up. Now I think I'll sprinkle a few seeds as repayment for what it did for me. Have a good time at the Tuttles."

She looked back after she walked away a few steps. He watched her, smiling and just about ready to turn cartwheels. If she had known, she wouldn't have thought it unusual. She felt the same way.

TEN

Even though it was not yet dark, the Tuttle house was ablaze with light when Professor Warren and Eve pulled up in their borrowed rig. Several guests were already there, for the sound of voices, min-

gled with laughter, drifted out through the open windows. She learned later that many had come from points far more distant than what they'd traveled; also, some had arrived by train.

A hostler promptly took over the care of the horse, and Howard Tuttle came out to greet them. He was wearing evening dress and Eve was glad she had insisted on her father bringing his. As for herself, she was wearing a trained gown of green satin with rows of puffings on the skirt. It was topped with an opera cape of cashmere in the same shade. Her hair was in curls which fell to the base of her neck, and looped through it were strands of artificial lily of the valley.

"Good evening, Professor," Tuttle exclaimed heartily. "And Miss Eve, how beautiful you look."

"Thank you," she replied modestly. "How nice to be here, Mr. Tuttle. My father and I have been looking forward to it."

At the door, Mrs. Tuttle greeted her with an embrace, then turned to welcome Professor Warren while a servant relieved Eve of her cape.

"My dear, you look ravishing," the older woman exclaimed, turning back to Eve.

"She looks irresistible."

Eve turned and her face almost touched Elisha's, who had bent forward to speak the compliment in her ear.

"Mother, may I take Eve around to introduce her?" he asked.

Mrs. Tuttle smiled in resignation. "I'm afraid it would be useless for me to refuse."

"It would indeed," he replied, his smile broad.

"Run along then," she said, waving them on. "I have some duties to attend to."

As they walked along the reception hall, Eve caught a glimpse of the dining room and paused to admire it. The dining table sparkled with a beautiful linen cloth, gleaming silver, china and glassware. Because the table would be removed later and the room used for dancing, the floor was bare and the wide boards were waxed to a sheen which reflected the candlelight and lamplight.

"How exquisite," she said earnestly.

"All in honor of you and your father," Elisha said grandly. "You'll meet some very important people here tonight and father feels it's worth all the expense to impress such a group. I'm going to take you through the parlor and introduce you to a few guests, but only a few because I want to talk with you. It's not too cold to walk through the garden for a while, and we can have privacy there."

Eve was amused at the sparsity and brevity of the introductions. The ladies were exquisitely gowned and the men were resplendent in evening dress. They were grouped around the large room and the conversation was lively, the laughter frequent. She met a banker, his wife and daughter, then a lumber mill executive and his wife and, finally, an attorney and his daughter. There was no opportunity to converse with them, much as she would have liked to, because Elisha's hand on her arm guided her along until they passed through the french doors, moved along the porch and stepped onto the path leading to the garden.

"I hardly think your mother would approve," she said, her eyes scolding him mildly. "There were at least twenty-five people in that room and I met only seven."

He laughed. "I told you I'd be selfish with you."

"You meant it, too," she replied. "I scarcely had time to admire your beautiful parlor."

"Time for that later. As for now, you'll meet more guests, I'm afraid. I see several of them out here."

Inside, Professor Warren was being taken around the room by Howard Tuttle, introduced to each of the guests and told what each represented. It was obvious how important that was to Howard Tuttle. Warren met the owner of a fleet of fast sailing vessels, a ship builder who touted the value of his new iron ships and the inevitable advent of steam, already being tested. Three bankers agreed that a college professor should get more money; a railroad executive seemed to be very interested in the castle as an investment until he learned the price. A lumber mill owner was lobbying for more railroad spur lines to take care of his products, and financiers were interested in learning Warren's thinking about the stability of the dollar.

But it was from a Portland politician that Warren first understood the real significance of this gathering. The surface reason was to honor him, a philosophy professor from Harvard, but the underlying motive lay in Howard Tuttle's so-far-unpublicized bid for a seat in the United States Senate.

Those who entered the conversation were of an opinion that he'd make a good one, and Warren was happy to back up those assertions. After all, Howard Tuttle was a highly successful man who had proven he could handle important affairs. And he was a fairly well-known philanthropist, which added a great deal to his lustre.

There was well-spiked punch for the men and bottles of Scotch whisky and rye for those whose appetites didn't run to punch. It was obvious to Professor Perry Warren why the conversation was so effervescent and gay.

In the garden, Eve and Elisha strolled leisurely along the path, stopping now and then to greet other guests doing the same thing. He guided her to a rose arbor beneath which was an empty bench.

"Let's sit here for a while," he said. "I want to talk with you."

Eve settled herself on the bench and Elisha sat alongside her. She couldn't help but compare him to Jim Canford. They were about the same age, and though Elisha was handsomer, he was far less rugged. He had, however, an enormous ego, and while in the manners of a gentleman he may have been a bit more polished, she preferred Jim's straightforwardness. They were about the same height and weight and might seem to be well matched on the surface, but Eve knew the strength in Jim's arms—the thought of it sent a warm glow through her—and the agility of his muscles. Elisha would have come off a poor second in any physical contest.

"Have you seen any more of those blue lights?" he asked.

"Yes," she replied, pleased at the note of concern in his voice, "again last night. Elisha, there's something very wrong on the peninsula."

"No, Eve. Not on the peninsula. It's deserted except for the castle."

"And the house where Jim Canford lives."

"Oh, yes. I forgot. Have you seen anything more of him?"

"Indeed, yes. He quite likely saved Papa's life and mine last night."

Elisha gave her a strange look. "What are you talking about?"

"The blue lights," she replied. "Last night Papa and I watched for them and they appeared. Papa knows they trouble me and he decided the best way for me to forget about them was to find out what caused them. So we rowed out to the wreck. Needless to say, we found nothing. And while we were on the wreck, a figure at the point signaled with a lantern."

"Was the figure signaling at you?"

"We don't know. But apparently not, for whoever it was didn't call out."

"Were you able to identify the person?"

"No. And we'd just got on the wreck and were determined to investigate that first. And that isn't all."

"Good heavens," Elisha exclaimed, looking more perturbed. "What else could have happened?"

"When we left the castle, it was in darkness. But while we were on the wreck, somebody lit the

lamp in the tower room and apparently watched us through the telescope."

"Are you certain?"

"Absolutely," Eve said firmly.

"But how could you tell from that distance—and in a fog like the one we had last night?"

"The fog hadn't yet rolled in, and whoever it was kept getting between the lamp and the window in front of the telescope. Every time he did, he obscured the lamp. Oh, someone was there all right. And that isn't all."

"What else could have happened?"

"When Papa went down the ladder to get into the dory, it wasn't there. Someone had cut the rope."

"That's horrible," Elisha exclaimed, then looked thoughtful. "I suppose it was Jim Canford who rescued you."

"It was," Eve replied. "He said he went to the castle to pay us a visit and when we weren't there, he checked to see if our dory was at the beach. When it wasn't, he rowed out because by then the fog was coming in. And believe me, we were most grateful that he came."

"I can imagine." Elisha seemed perplexed. "But don't you think it strange that he appeared so opportunely?"

Eve's smile was embarrassed as she recalled her suspicions of the previous night. "I did, at first. But I'm sure he wouldn't cut the rope securing the dory to the ladder, then pretend to rescue us."

"I wish I were as sure," Elisha said worriedly. "But then, he did bring you both back safely, so that's in his favor. Unless, of course, he's lying."

"I'm sure he wasn't," Eve said, her voice firm.

"If his motive for coming to the castle was to visit you, I'm sure he wasn't, too," Elisha said with a sigh. "Tell me, did you make a search of the castle when you returned?"

"We did," she said, "and found nothing—until we went to the tower room. It was in darkness then, but there was a smell of tobacco smoke in the air. We saw a meerschaum on the desk. It was still warm and had been recently smoked. I saw it in the desk the day before. It was the kind of pipe my Uncle Jabez smoked. Papa said so."

"Are you saying your Uncle Jabez is alive?"

"No. But the pipe had been smoked by someone who knew its whereabouts."

"Do you believe your Uncle Jabez haunts the castle?" Elisha asked wonderingly. It was obvious her story had had a chilling effect on him.

"I've never believed in ghosts before—and I don't want to now—but *there was something in that tower room on two different occasions.* I could sense it—yet it didn't frighten me. However, I did get terribly frightened there our first night in the castle. I could see the blue lights on the wreck from my bedroom window. I was intrigued and, on impulse, I went to the tower room alone to look through the telescope. I was there only minutes when a sudden wind came up, blew open the doors and put out the lamp. I became panic-stricken at the time, but later, with Papa, I realized how foolish I'd behaved." She paused, then added thoughtfully, "I think what I really feel in that room is a protective presence."

"Do you feel that way about the wreck?"

"No," she said with a shudder. "I'm frightened every time I set foot on the derelict."

"I don't blame you," he replied. "But why should you be? Unless there is someone or something on it causing those lights."

"I believe those lights are meant to frighten us. I'd rather believe that than accept the ghost theory."

"But why?" he persisted.

"You'll probably laugh," she said, her tone a trifle embarrassed. "But I think the ship may have been deliberately wrecked."

His brows raised in skepticism. "That's preposterous."

"Perhaps," she admitted. "Papa thinks so too, though he says we're just guessing."

"What makes you think such a thing?"

Eve let her breath out in one long sigh. "I don't want to believe in ghosts. I don't want to believe Uncle Jabez is haunting the castle. I can't believe he's alive, yet I wonder if someone isn't trying to tell us something."

"A ghost trying to tell you something?" Elisha said, his tone unbelieving.

"Oh, Elisha," she said, her tone one of bewilderment, "truly I don't know. It's a puzzlement, that's to be sure. And sometimes a very frightening one."

"I agree," he replied. "And I'd like to renew our invitation for you and your father to visit in our home until you have disposed of the castle."

"That's out of the question," she said, thinking

of their plans for the castle. "But thank you again. I appreciate your concern and your generosity. You see . . ."

She was distracted by the loud, rasping voice of a woman who shouted an unladylike imprecation somewhere beyond their range of vision. There was the sound of a brief struggle and both Elisha and Eve arose quickly just as a woman, over six feet in height and sturdy in girth, came lumbering along the path with a groom behind her, trying to stop her. She shook him off with little trouble and headed for Eve and Elisha. As she drew closer, Eve saw that the woman was about forty-five, a gross, tough-looking individual in a faded sweater, black skirt and heavy shoes. Her graying hair was wild and unkempt and she was in a towering rage.

"It's Mrs. Hartley," the groom said. "Ned Hartley's widow. I tried to stop her, Mr. Elisha, but it'll take more'n me to do it."

"You're damned right it will," the woman bellowed. She squinted a Eve through small, intensely black eyes. "Well now, if it ain't my pretty. Old Jabez's niece. That's you, ain't it?"

"Yes . . ." Eve admitted hesitantly, not knowing how to handle this situation.

"Well, I'll tell you first and then I'll tell your pa, damn him. My Ned went down with the *Elizabeth B* and you can't tell me it was an accident. Now you and your pa are here to take what's left of Jabez's property. But what about me, eh? What's my share of the swag, eh? I lost my Ned. He was worth somethin', wasn't he? Where do I come in? Who provides for his poor old widow who ain't

able to do for herself? Who provides for her, eh?"

"I . . . don't know what to say," Eve told her. "I'm sorry your husband died, but . . . I don't understand what you're after, Mrs. Hartley. Truly I don't."

"Truly you don't," she mocked. She suddenly seized Eve by both arms and shook her savagely. "I want money, that's what I want. Jabez left the castle and I say I'm due a share in the money it'll bring. I mean to get it, my pretty, or I'll tear somebody's hair out and it'll likely be yours."

"Amanda," Elisha finally managed to get a word in. "Let go of Miss Warren and get out of here. You've caused enough mischief."

She released Eve and turned her venom on Elisha. "Mischief, is it? I'm only lookin' for what's rightfully mine, and I'll get it. Don't you put on your airs with me, Elisha Tuttle. You ain't one whit better'n anybody else. Now get outa my way. I mean to talk to Jabez's brother."

Elisha stepped in her path, but she flung him aside as easily as she had handled the groom. Her heavy shoes clattered noisily on the cobbled walk, continuing across the porch, then on into the parlor where the guests were gathered.

"Elisha," Eve said, rubbing her arms which felt sore and bruised and undoubtedly would bear black-and-blue marks in the days to come, "isn't she a dangerous woman?"

"No . . . she just talks loudly and makes threats. She wouldn't hurt anybody."

"She hurt me."

"That was terrible," he admitted. "I'm sorry about it."

"But why does she think Papa owes her money from Jabez's estate? I never knew a ship's captain was financially responsible for the loss of any member of his crew."

"He isn't and never was. It's just something Amanda thought up. Papa can handle her. He's used to Amanda. She's been to him several times to get money. I think he secretly gives her some, but she wants a great deal. Once she mentioned fifty thousand dollars."

"I hope I never meet her when I'm alone," Eve said. "Listen to her—shouting like that."

As they approached the house, they could hear Amanda's fiercely loud voice claiming her rights. Eve and Elisha reached the french door in time to see Howard Tuttle take Amanda's arm and gently lead her to the front door. She dragged to a stop, looked back into the room and cursed Professor Warren roundly before she permitted Howard to escort her out of the house. He was gone for some time. When he returned, he walked directly to Warren and Eve, who now stood at her father's side.

"I apologize profoundly for the interruption, Professor Warren. And to you, Eve, for that woman's unseemly behavior. The poor woman is quite mad and I'm afraid that accounts for her behavior. If it occurs again, I shall take steps to see that she's put away."

"I'm afraid the woman is completely out of her mind," Mrs. Tuttle said. "There were many widows made that night, but she's the only one who became obsessed with the idea of being paid because her husband was lost in the wreck. I'm

ashamed of the entire episode. Please forgive us, Professor . . . Eve . . ."

Elisha was about to relate what had happened in the garden, but Eve placed a restraining hand on his arm.

"It wasn't your fault," she said kindly. "I suggest we forget it."

"A good idea," Warren said. "I must confess I didn't know how to deal with her, and for a Doctor of Philosophy to find himself tongue-tied is not a good thing and quite unusual, I swear."

Their graciousness cheered everyone, and by the time dinner was announced, Amanda Hartley had all but been forgotten, or at least relegated to the status of an unimportant subject.

There were oysters on the half shell, so fresh they still smelled of the sea. The sauce made Eve gasp, but it was excellent. The soup was a clear clam broth so as not to interfere with the real eating about to come.

For a main course the Tuttles served venison along with creamy mashed Maine potatoes from Aroostook County and several locally grown vegetables. Three kinds of wine were served, and for dessert there was a sherbet moulded in the form of a lobster.

Table discussion was lively and interesting, and a loud approval of plans for the castle to be converted into a summer hotel resulted when Professor Warren broached the subject. Elisha was properly attentive but rather subdued, Eve thought, but she didn't mind, for her thoughts were of Jim Canford. The result was that her eyes glowed and her face took on an ethereal beauty that caught the

admiration of the men and the envy of the women.

After dinner, a piano was rolled into the stripped dining room, a fiddler and an accordionist appeared and soon there was music for dancing.

Eve danced first with her father, and then Elisha claimed her. After that she was quite certain she danced with every man present, except for one ancient who was grateful that she sat it out with him. His bones, he declared, were too brittle to risk on a slippery dance floor.

It was after midnight when the party finally broke up. Some of the guests were staying over. Those who lived within a reasonable distance climbed into their carriages for the trip home. When Warren and Eve were rolling down the drive in the rig, Elisha came riding hard to catch up with them. He slowed his mount and shouted to them.

"I'm riding along if you don't mind, sir."

"We're all right," the Professor assured him, "but if you want the ride, we welcome you."

Elisha rode slightly behind the rig and Warren gave a short laugh. "He simply wants to see you, my dear. What's there to be protected from here? But after that party I'd indulge anyone in whatever he asked of me. It's hard to imagine an affair as great as this one, with so distinguished a company, could possibly be held in this comparative wilderness."

"It was lovely," Eve agreed. "I had such a good time."

"Except for that poor misled woman, the very best."

"She looked dangerous to me, Papa." Eve refrained from telling her father how Amanda Hartley had gripped her arms so hard they still ached. "Perhaps that's the reason Elisha is accompanying us."

Warren chuckled. "I would hate to depend on Elisha to stop that woman if she decided to attack us. Don't worry. Howard Tuttle calmed her down."

They covered the brief trip in good time. Near the end of their journey, Elisha forged ahead, dismounted, and was ready when they drew up before the castle to help Eve down from the rig.

"I'll put the rig away and water the horse," Warren said.

"Are you too tired for a brief stroll, Eve?" Elisha asked, his face hopeful. "I'd like to talk with you."

She glanced skyward. It was a dark night, with no trace of a moon and only faint glimpses of starlight. But she was still animated from the party and a leisurely walk to the point would perhaps tire her just enough so that she'd drop off to sleep.

"It sounds like a good idea," she said.

As they started out, he said, "I'm really sorry about what Amanda did to you."

"Don't think about it," Eve said graciously. "I shan't let it trouble me."

He smiled gratefully. "You have a lot of courage. I told father about the episode of the warm pipe and the tobacco smoke in the tower room. He doesn't believe in ghosts, but he does think someone means to do you and your father harm. He's going to talk to your father about it."

"That's very kind of him, but no one at the cas-

tle or the wreck has laid a hand on me. I'm more afraid of that demented woman."

"Papa quieted her down. I'm sure she won't make any more trouble."

"I hope not," Eve said with a shiver of remembrance. "I couldn't cope with her any more than you could."

"But you think you can cope with Jim Canford?"

The question, coming so abruptly, surprised her. "I'm positive," she said firmly, almost with a touch of pique in her voice.

"Did it ever occur to you that he's something of a mystery here and that he could be responsible for all these things which are happening?"

"I don't see any reason for it," she countered. She was glad of the darkness, for it kept hidden the look of concern on her face. She knew Jim was keeping something from her. She'd suspected it even before he admitted it. She had to trust him. She loved him and he loved her, though he wouldn't yet state that love.

"Do you trust him?" Elisha asked incredulously.

"Yes. Are you trying to tell me something bad about Jim?"

"Would you continue to trust a liar?"

Her eyes widened in amazement. "A liar? Jim? What proof have you?"

"We've checked. His name is not Jim Canford. That much we know. He claims to have rented the house from Mark Bryant's widow. She happens to be dead. We tried to verify this through Bryant's

son, but we couldn't find him. His name also happens to be . . . Jim."

"Do you mean that Jim Canford may be Jim Bryant?"

"Exactly. And don't forget, Mark Bryant was first mate on the *Elizabeth B* and he died in the wreck too. Maybe, if Jim is his son, he's after the same thing that Ned Hartley's widow demands—some sort of payment for the loss of his father."

"Have you proof of that?" she demanded.

"No—not yet." Elisha sensed the antagonism in her. "Please, Eve, we're frightened for you—*and* your father. There's something wrong with this Jim Canford and I thought you should be warned."

She relented. "I'm grateful for your concern and I intend to ask Jim about this. I have a feeling though that Jim wouldn't harm either my father or me."

"I hope you're right. That is, in a way I hope so. I sense that you're either in love with him or ready to fall in love. I find you quite irresistible, as did every male at the dance tonight. I intend to court you, Eve, just as soon as you've been relieved of the burden of worry over the castle."

She had to repress a smile. How precise he was. He wanted nothing to interfere with his romancing of her. Everything had to be done properly. Again she thought of the contrast in the two men.

Elisha continued speaking, "And if I find that this Jim Canford has deliberately deceived you, or has hurt you in any way, my father will have him run out of the state."

Elisha's tone had become so gruff she felt uneasy. It was upsetting her, hearing him speak of Jim this way. She trusted Jim, couldn't bear to hear anything that might weaken her trust.

She said, "I'm getting cold, Elisha. Please take me back."

"Of course, Eve." His tone softened. "Forgive me for speaking this way about a man who has obviously gained your trust, but I'm gravely concerned about the situation here."

"Thank you, Elisha," she said, and meant it. "I appreciate it and so will my father when I tell him."

Elisha caught her hand, raised it to his lips and kissed it. "You're a very dear girl. Some day I hope to be able to tell you how dear."

Before Eve could remonstrate, they heard a shout. A man appeared around the corner of the castle. He was calling Eve's name. She saw that it was Jim.

"Your father," he said excitedly. "Someone struck him down."

"Where is he?" she cried out, running to him. "Take me to him, Jim."

He nodded and led the way into the castle. Professor Warren lay beside the stove in the kitchen. The floor was spattered with blood and his head was matted with it. Eve dropped to her knees beside him, but Jim seized her roughly and brought her to her feet.

"Don't touch him," he ordered brusquely. "Elisha, harness the rig. Fast, do you hear me? We've got to get him to Indian Cove and a doctor. He can't stay here."

Elisha was about to argue the point, but a look at Jim's set face reflected in the lamplight, warned him it would be wise to obey.

Jim knelt beside the injured man. Without looking up, he said, "Eve, there's hot water on the back of the stove. Get me a basin of it. Then find me some clean towels. After that, bring down clean bedsheets and cut them into bandages, an inch and a half wide. Go on . . . hurry!"

As she provided the hot water, brought the towels and then ripped the sheets into strips, she watched Jim work. He opened her father's collar and belt, unbuttoned his shirt and placed an ear against his chest to listen to the heartbeat. Then he gently used a stack of towels to pillow the Professor's head. He asked sharply for scissors and she brought them. He began to cut away the hair around the wound.

"Who . . . did it?" she asked.

"Don't know. I was down by the path and I heard someone running. I had a glimpse of a heavy-set man, not very fleet, but too far away for me to stop him. I knew something had happened because the castle door was wide open. I thought at first it was you and I nearly died . . ."

"Jim, how badly hurt is he?"

"I don't know. We have to shave his head, expose the lacerations and look for signs of a concussion or a fracture. He's unconscious, so I suspect a concussion at least. I don't think he's mortally hurt, but the blow was meant to kill him. The man who attacked him used a length of cordwood and hit him several times."

"Jim, I love him so. Please do all you can for him."

"I intend to. His pulse is fair, respiration is good. I doubt there's any serious brain damage, but we can't always be sure. I do know he needs constant care and the castle is not the place for it. Especially if he has a fracture and we have to elevate the broken pieces of skull."

"Don't let him die," she implored frantically.

Jim looked up. "He isn't going to die. Hang onto yourself. This is no time to go to pieces."

Jim applied bandages after cleaning the wound, and he did it with an expertness that amazed Eve. The rig was at the door by this time. He sent Eve for a blanket while he and Elisha, already out of breath, helped carry Warren to the rig. There, Jim made him as comfortable as possible and wrapped him in the blanket she held ready. Then he climbed onto the seat. Elisha started moving toward his horse.

"Stay here," Jim ordered brusquely, "and supply yourself with some sort of weapon. That man may be back. Take care of Eve or I'll have your heart. Understand?"

Elisha nodded, unable to answer, too stunned by the turn of events to even grow angry at the curtness of Jim's voice. As the rig rolled down toward the road, Elisha joined Eve, who silently watched her father being driven away. She ached to be with him, but there wasn't enough room in the rig. She prayed silently as the rig was swallowed up in the night.

"An idea just hit me," he said.

"Please, Elisha, not now."

"Has to be now," he said, once again in command of himself. "It's concerned with what's just happened. Don't you think it's possible that your father entered the castle and surprised Jim at something? Jim struck him down and then came out to find us with that wild story of a heavy-set man running away."

"Oh, dear God—please don't say that, Elisha! Jim has just driven off with my father. He wouldn't . . ." She couldn't finish the sentence. She wouldn't believe Jim would take him to do him further harm. Nor could she believe Jim had injured her father and pretended to find him.

"One more small item. Mark Bryant's son Jim finished his education at Yale Medical School a few months ago and he's been interning at New Haven Hospital. Wouldn't you say he attended your father just as a doctor would have?"

Eve could only stare at Elisha, and once again the doubt she'd known when she first encountered Jim Canford, then thrust out of her mind as she grew to know him, returned. Was Jim Canford a fraud?

ELEVEN

Elisha armed himself with a stout length of wood and spent the night in the entrance hall at the bottom of the stairs. He spread himself across the lower step so that no one could get by him, and he

alternately dozed or listened in respectful apprehension. There was small chance of his falling into a deep sleep, for the hall was cold, and clammy drafts of air seemed constantly moving through it.

Eve locked herself in her room as she had done on previous nights and prepared herself for bed. However, sleep was impossible for she couldn't blot out the vision of her father lying on the floor unconscious, his head bloodied, and she wondered who, around here, was capable of such a vicious act. Certainly, even if her Uncle Jabez were alive, he wouldn't attack his own brother. But could it be some other member of the crew who escaped the ship? Someone she'd never seen? It was certainly not the act of a ghost. With the attack on her father, she knew it was a living being—an inhuman one, to be sure—but who? And would she be next?

Apparently, their idea was to frighten her and her father away from the castle. Having failed in that, they resorted to murder . . . or near murder. She winced, thinking of it. If anything happened to her father . . . if he died . . . and all because of a castle they would have been perfectly content without. She wished she'd never heard of it—or Uncle Jabez—or his beautiful bride—or the Tuttles . . . Or Jim? She felt a tight band of pain around her heart. She refused to believe he could be a part of the evil that walked the castle and the *Elizabeth B*. She loved and trusted him and felt certain that at this very moment his sole concern was caring for her father.

It was almost dawn when sleep overcame her, and she didn't awaken until mid-morning. She arose, bathed and dressed hurriedly, letting her hair hang loose about her shoulders. She went downstairs and called to Elisha. When he didn't respond, she ran outside.

He was saddling his horse and greeted her with a smile. "Good morning. I gather you managed some sleep."

"A little," she said. "May I get you some breakfast?"

"The idea sounds good," he replied. "But I've been thinking about your father and wondering why we've had no word from your friend about him."

She swallowed hard in an attempt to stifle the panic that overtook her. "I'm sure if my father were in danger, Jim would have sent for me."

Elisha's mouth tightened grimly. "Eve, I know you're worried and I don't blame you. So am I. Would you like me to make a fast ride to find out how your father is?"

"Oh, Elisha," she exclaimed, pleased. "Would you?"

"Are you sure you won't be afraid here alone?"

"Positive," she replied. "Not in daylight."

"Very well. I'll leave at once."

He finished saddling the horse, mounted it and dug heels into the animal's flanks. He went tearing down to the road, not looking back. Eve knew he was angry at Jim, and she had to admit she'd hoped when she came downstairs he would have returned with word of her father's condition.

She returned to the kitchen and shivered at the sight of the blood, the towels and the other reminders of her father's injury. She started a fire in the stove, gathered up the towels, put them in a tub of water to soak, then scrubbed the floor. She put a pot of coffee on the boil and, on impulse, set the table for two, just as if her father were coming down to breakfast.

She placed a jar of apple jelly on the table and a dish containing several slices of bread although she had no desire to eat. She was just pouring a cup of coffee when she heard the sound of the rig approaching. She fled through the castle to the front door to greet Jim as he pulled up. He alighted from the rig slowly, giving further evidence of the fatigue etched on his face.

"How is he, Jim? Please . . . tell me . . ."

His arms enclosed her as she looked up into his face. "Your father will be all right. There's no fracture, but he has a concussion. He's still unconscious, but an Indian Cove doctor is with him. We put him to bed in the Tuttle house. The nearest hospital is too far away."

"I'll go there at once . . ."

"Hold on," he said. "No need to. You'd only be in the way. You're more needed right here, especially now, because I'm in need of breakfast before I drop in my tracks."

"Of course. I'll get you something. Oh, Jim . . . thank you . . ."

"I'll unhitch the horse and let him graze. I'd like lots of hot coffee. Oh yes . . . I met Elisha —told him he needn't come back. He didn't seem to like the idea."

She smiled ruefully. "I'm afraid you two don't like one another."

"I'm afraid you're right," he said, grinning.

She had his breakfast of bacon, eggs and fried potatoes ready by the time he walked into the kitchen. He sat down and drank the cup of steaming hot coffee before he touched the food, which he downed with relish. Then she seemed to relax.

"Nobody can figure out who the attacker could have been," he said. "I described him the best I knew how, but no one in Indian Cove answered to the description in any way. They tried to tell me I was wrong, but I know what I saw—the shadowy form of a very bulky man running as fast as he could."

"Papa won't . . . be sick after this? I mean from the injury?"

"I'm sure there's no brain damage, Eve. His reflexes are good, even though he's still unconscious. When he wakes up, he'll be tested further. You can count on it—he'll be all right."

Eve felt the first tears she'd shed begin to roll down her cheeks. They came mostly from the reaction of sheer relief.

"I wish we'd never come here. I wish Papa had let the old castle just fall away to dust."

"Don't say that. We wouldn't have met."

She remembered what Elisha had told her, his suspicions as to the assailant and his knowledge that Jim had been lying.

"Jim, I want to ask you a few questions . . ."

He nodded, his eyes drooping from fatigue. "Fire away, Eve. I've nothing to hide from you. Nothing . . . at . . . all . . ."

His head sagged, his shoulders relaxed and he bent forward to place his head on the table, where he promptly fell fast asleep. She didn't move him or touch him. He deserved this sleep, and uncomfortable though the position was, he had no awareness of it.

She couldn't work around the kitchen for fear of awakening him, so she went upstairs and tidied up her bedroom. Then she made her way to the tower room. There were several books there, one of which she was particularly interested in.

First, though, she peered through the telescope. It was a bright, clear day edged with autumn crispness. The cold weather wouldn't be long in coming now. The wreck was deserted except for a few gulls circling above it, as if they expected scraps would be thrown into the wind for them to retrieve.

She examined the shelf of books and took down one titled *Slaves and Slave Ships*. The name had caught her eye the first time she had scanned them. She brought it over to the desk, sat down and started to turn the pages. It was the illustrations which drew her attention. Halfway through the book, she found a series of drawings that showed the hold of a slaver, with the Negroes chained to iron rings set into the hull at regular, measured intervals. Through larger rings were passed additional chains.

She sat there studying the drawings, and she mentally erased the images of the slaves and the chains, so that she saw only the large rings and the holes made by the smaller ones. This was what she'd seen in the hold of the *Elizabeth B.*

She turned the page and shuddered in horror at the drawing of a brutal flogging of a slave in the hold of a ship. The man was lashed to four big rings . . . like those she'd seen on the ship her Uncle Jabez had owned and sailed.

Eve laid the book, face down, on the desk. Her hand brushed the meerschaum pipe and she remembered its warmth and the smell of its smoke throughout the room that night. If Jabez was alive, he'd have all the answers necessary, but why didn't he make known the fact that he hadn't drowned? Was it because he'd gotten off the ship before it hit the rocks, or had he not been aboard at all on that voyage?

A dozen other questions came to her mind, but not one answer. Her thoughts turned to her father and his condition. Would he really recover or was Jim merely trying to buoy up her spirits? And if her father did recover, would he be able to identify his attacker? If not, would the assailant strike again? Despite the brightness of the day, fear started to creep through her, and the sound of footsteps slowly coming up the stairs caused her to grip the chair to still the panic that swept through her. They paused for a moment at the top, then the doorknob was gripped and slowly turned. As it did, she screamed.

"Eve!" It was Jim, his face still sleep-filled, but now beset with alarm at the fright he'd caused her. "Forgive me!" he cried, taking her in his arms. "I didn't mean to frighten you."

"Oh, Jim!" she sighed in blessed relief. "I didn't know who was coming . . . I was thinking of what had happened to Papa and . . ."

"I know," he spoke soothingly. "It's all right."

She looked up into his face. It still bore traces of exhaustion.

"You're tired," she said. "I wanted to ask you some questions, but they can wait."

"No," he contradicted. "I'm rested. Ask away."

"Thanks, Jim, and while I like your arms around me, you'd better sit down."

He didn't argue, choosing the chair by the fireplace. Eve resumed her seat at the desk. She hated to subject him to this questioning. It seemed grossly unfair, but she had to know the answers and there was no time for further delay.

"First, I want to know if you're Jim Bryant."

"I can see Elisha Tuttle has been talking his head off," he said wryly.

She smiled, but remained silent, waiting for his answer.

"Yes, I'm Jim Bryant. Mark Bryant, my father, was first mate under your uncle on the *Elizabeth B*. I've never been satisfied that the wrecking of the schooner was accidental. I think it was deliberate, and if so, I consider the crew was murdered. My father died in that wreck. I intend to find out who killed him and see that the culprit is brought to justice."

"But why the assumed name?"

"If I'd come here as Mark's son, I'd have aroused the suspicions of whoever I'm trying to identify. I could safely return as someone else because I'd been away at school since I was twelve. The few times I came home, I stayed on the peninsula and no one saw much of me. Mother used to visit me regularly at school. Father was

determined that I'd get the best education. I did, and after his death, Mother came to live with me. She died a few months ago—of grief. That's when I made up my mind that if the schooner was purposely wrecked, someone was going to pay for it."

"You're a doctor, aren't you?"

"Not quite. I'm an intern, but in one more year I can enter private practice. Oh, I could now if I wished, but time spent in a hospital is valuable to a physician."

"Then you've encountered injuries like my father's before."

"Scores of them. They're very common. I assure you again, he'll be all right."

"You can't hide under the alias any longer, Jim. Elisha will spread the word, because he recognized the fact that you knew something about medicine from the way you treated Papa and he also knows that Jim Bryant had gone to medical school."

"It's all right. I was about ready to come into the open. Certainly I wasn't getting very far as Jim Canford. Eve, now that you know, does it make any difference?"

"Not the slightest. I love you. I never lost faith in you. I never will, but I'm afraid for you and for Papa. The attack on him was meant to be murder."

"Don't forget, you might be in danger too," he cautioned.

"I know," she acknowledged. "If only he'd wake up, maybe he could tell us who hit him—or at least give a description."

"In the meantime, we'll keep our eyes on the

wreck. I believe the answer to everything that's happened is hidden there."

She frowned. "Jim, have you been entering this tower room somehow, without leaving a trace? Did you use the telescope to watch the wreck, and did you deliberately smoke Uncle Jabez's pipe to make us think he'd returned?"

"Yes. Jabez never gave up a fight. I wanted the rumor spread that he's alive. If the culprit responsible for the wreck of the schooner and the deaths of its crew believes that, he knows he'll be exposed. Apparently the stories you've told have spread around so that someone is very worried."

"So much so, he attacked my father."

"I'm sorry about that. I didn't know it would go that way."

"Just how did you think it would go?" she asked, a tinge of irritation in her voice.

"I didn't know," he said contritely.

"I'm sorry," she said impulsively. "I shouldn't blame you for what happened. After all, you found my father. You saved his life." Her eyes showed her gratitude. "Jim, how many times have you been out to the wreck?"

"Ten . . . fifteen. I lost track."

"Did you enter the hold?"

"Many times."

"Was the *Elizabeth B* ever used as a slave ship?"

He eyed her curiously. "So you reasoned that out. Smart girl, Eve. How'd you do it?"

She handed him over the opened book. "When my father and I visited the wreck the first time, I

saw where the chains had been fastened. I saw the whipping place. The pictures in this book prove I'm right."

"I didn't know the boat was used for that purpose, but after seeing it, I read up on the subject. The importation of slaves was declared illegal long ago, but slave smugglers flourished, even though the penalties were severe if they were caught. Slaves brought a handsome price."

"What an awful thing," she said sadly. "I had such respect for Uncle Jabez."

"Don't draw a bead on him yet, Eve. Prior to those days, slaving was legal and considered not too ungentlemanly. I think Jabez and my father ran plenty of slaves in the old ship—and I don't like the thought of it any more than you—and they got the new one because it could hold three or four times as many slaves and make the trip much faster."

"How horrible."

Eve thought of the beautiful lady in the portrait downstairs and wondered how she had felt about what her husband did—if, indeed, she knew. Perhaps she hadn't learned until later and it was more than she could bear. Eve knew that if her father were here he would tell her she was letting her imagination run away with her. And of course it was true.

"Maybe," Jim broke into her thoughts, "Jabez was in so deep he couldn't get out. Who knows? I won't condemn my father until I know the facts."

"And how do you propose to get them?"

"I think the answer lies aboard the wreck.

Ever since I came here a few weeks ago, I've seen traces of others who've boarded the wreck. They're after something."

"But what, Jim?"

"Captain Jabez's log book was never found. Maybe it's hidden aboard and maybe it contains the truth about what happened. I can't think of anything else they'd be after. Obviously they haven't found it, because the blue lights are still evident."

"Why blue lights?"

"I don't know unless they figured they'd be harder to see from shore. Or perhaps they figured they'd frighten anyone who might be attracted by them. They have to operate by night. By day, they'd be seen by the lobstermen who sail by."

He arose, walked over to the 'scope and looked through it. Eve joined him, but remained silent. She was pleased that he had now told her the real story of why he was here, and she was grateful for his confidence.

Without taking his eye from the 'scope, he said, "Eve, I want to stay here. I want to watch the wreck. If the blue light comes again, I'm going out there as quickly as I can and I'm going armed."

"I'm going with you," she said promptly.

"No," he began to protest, then paused. "Of course you are. How can I leave you here alone? Very well. Undoubtedly they'll move fast now and I hope it will be tonight. If they think Jabez is alive, you can bet it'll be tonight."

He pushed the telescope to a vertical position

and turned to Eve. His hands cupped her face as he said, "I have another confession to make."

"Oh, dear me, what now!" she exclaimed, but not in alarm.

"The reason I didn't kiss you that night in the boat was because I reeked of pipe tobacco. I didn't want you to know I'd smoked Jabez's pipe. Forgive me, angel, but I wanted you to think he had come back and you'd spread the word. Which you did."

"You know," she said thoughtfully, "we haven't had a moment's peace since we came here, but you've been our salvation. I don't believe whoever has been doing these things to frighten us expected we would ever come to Maine."

He touched her hair, bent down and kissed her brow lightly. "I'm glad you did. I fell in love with you the moment I saw you—before you even knew I existed—the day you arrived. I stayed away from my lobster pots just to see you again. Then you stepped into the sedge and, believe me, it was no accident I happened to be close by. You don't know how much I hoped something exactly like that would happen so I could rush to the rescue."

Their eyes glowed with their love for one another. His arms moved down to enclose her waist and his lips sought hers. He drew her close and his lips pressed down hungrily against hers. All the love he had stored up for her was revealed in this kiss. She felt herself responding with an abandon she'd not dreamed herself capable of. It was with an effort she broke off the embrace and moved over to stand near the desk. He understood and made no move to follow her.

"Jim, you've used this room since you came here, haven't you?" Her voice was tremulous with emotion and she gripped the side of the desk to steady herself.

"Yes." His own voice was husky. "Before you and your father arrived, I practically lived here because I could watch the wreck constantly. I cleaned the room up, but if I'd known you were coming I certainly wouldn't have because it was a dead giveaway. I also kept the kitchen stove shining and the woodbox full. But I stopped cooking my meals here when I realized somebody might see the smoke from the chimney."

"You're forgiven and now duly thanked for keeping the stove clean and supplying the woodbox, but how did you enter and leave this tower room? I heard you up here the day we came. I was puzzled by footsteps that never came downstairs."

He walked to the french doors, opened them, stepped onto the little balcony. He beckoned her to join him and when she did, he had her lean over the railing while he pointed out a large oak almost touching the side of the castle and the parapet which ran to a point just below the balcony.

"I climbed the tree, made my way out along that big branch, transferred to the parapet, stepped along it like a rope walker, reached up, grasped this rail and swung myself onto the balcony. I carried a knife with which I could open the french doors if they were closed and latched. I left the same way, but you darned near caught me."

"Then the ghosts of Jabez's castle have been finally laid to rest," she said in relief.

"But there are still mysteries. Who wrecked the schooner, who attacked your father?"

"And what are the blue lights?" she added.

"When we solve one, we'll solve the others," he prophesied. "Which brings up the need for a plan of action. We can't do much until they act first, and I have an idea it won't be until after dark. Therefore, I suggest I hitch up the rig and drive you to Indian Cove so you may see your father."

"Please, Jim, let's do that right now."

"At once. Then we'll come back here. I'll have to accept your hospitality of a bed so I can rest a while, and after that some food. Then we can watch for the blue lights, or the boarders, and find out who they are and what they're after."

"Jim, I just thought of something absolutely horrible."

"Horrible? To us?"

"What if we find out that my uncle was responsible for the wreck, that he put the ship on the rocks deliberately. He'd be guilty of murdering your father. How then, could we . . . you and I . . . ?"

"My darling, I had the same thought, but in reverse. So however it turns out, we decide here and now that it won't matter. I love you. I want to marry you as soon as I can. Who killed whom has no bearing on what we do. Agreed?"

She walked over to him, stood on tiptoe, and kissed him lightly. "I hoped you'd say that. I love you too, Jim, with all my heart."

"That's what I wanted to hear. Please don't ever stop saying it." He kissed her again, then

guided her to the door. "Now we'd better get a move on. We've so much to do and I'm more than ever in a hurry to finish this. I have a very strong motive to settle the matter forever."

"That's what I want, Jim. Jim Bryant. I wonder if I'll learn to love that name as I did Jim Canford."

"You will," he promised. "Jim Canford was a nice enough fellow, but he had too many secrets from his girl—couldn't even tell her he loved her. Jim Bryant has no secrets and never will have."

TWELVE

Eve sat beside the bed in the Tuttle guest room and held her father's hand. He hadn't awakened and he was probably unaware of her presence, but she remained with him until late afternoon. She believed there might be a chance that while he couldn't express himself, he was aware.

The local doctor came by just before she left. He was an impressive figure with mutton chop whiskers and a very professional manner.

"Your father will be fine," he promised. "By tomorrow he'll likely wake up, and in a few days he'll be fit as a fiddle. His heart is strong, he's breathing well, and as soon as the concussion is relieved, he'll suffer no ill effects, I assure you."

"Thank you, Doctor," she said earnestly.

"You can give much of the credit to the young man who attended him first. He did a remarkable job. Absolutely remarkable."

In the Tuttle living room, Ada Tuttle sat before a sterling silver tea service, beside which was a tray of small cakes. She motioned Eve to a chair, picked up a cup and saucer and started to pour. Eve could find no excuse not to remain and reluctantly sat down.

"We insist, Howard and I," Mrs. Tuttle said solicitously, "that your father stay with us just as long as it takes him to get completely well again. Cream or lemon, my dear?"

"Cream, please. We're very grateful, Mrs. Tuttle. You've been more than kind to us."

"Nonsense, my dear. That such a horrible thing could have happened in this community. No one can imagine who would have wanted to inflict such violence on your father."

"I can't imagine either. But then, I'm practically a stranger here. I'm sure it was a deliberate attempt to kill him."

Eve accepted her tea and nibbled on a small cake Mrs. Tuttle offered.

"We only hope when he awakens, if he doesn't know the identity of his attacker, he can at least give a description. We'll get in touch with the constable immediately. Howard is very concerned, as am I. We like you both and we hope you won't give up your idea of turning the castle into a summer hotel."

"I'm no longer sure what our plans are, Mrs. Tuttle. Naturally Papa will decide that."

"Of course, dear. More cakes—or tea?"

"No, thank you." Eve smiled a gracious refusal.

Mrs. Tuttle sighed. "It was such a brilliant plan for the castle."

Eve looked pensive. "Sometimes I feel the castle is an evil place."

"Evil?" Mrs. Tuttle's brows raised in amazement.

Eve nodded. "I hear footsteps, yet I see no one. Then I find Uncle Jabez's pipe has been smoked." She leaned forward and lowered her voice to a whisper. "Did Elisha tell you my father and I suspect my uncle is alive?"

Mrs. Tuttle set her cup down with a clatter. "That's preposterous. If your Uncle Jabez were alive, he would certainly show himself. Now if you said he haunted the castle, I might be able to accept that. He loved your aunt so and he mourned her deeply. Had everything in the place covered up after she died."

"I know. There's one thing certain, though. If my uncle is alive, he's as elusive as a ghost. Now, Mrs. Tuttle, I must go. Thank you so much for caring for my father—and for the tea. It has made me feel better."

"I knew it would." Mrs. Tuttle arose. "We'll take very good care of your father, my dear. We're only sorry you won't stay here also."

"I must return to the castle. I've so much to do there. But thank you for the offer."

Mrs. Tuttle escorted Eve to the door. She was surprised to see that the day which had started out so bright was now overcast, but she was

pleased to see the rig awaiting her, with Jim already on the seat. Luke, the head groom, stood beside it. He looked more stolid and enormous than ever, and as she accepted the aid of his hand to assist her up she realized just how powerful he was.

As the rig moved out, she felt a pang of remorse at leaving her father, but she knew she could do no good there. Besides, since the attack on her father, she was more determined than ever to solve the mystery surrounding the castle and the wreck. In so doing, her father's assailant might be revealed. After they'd gone a way, she turned her head to look back. The groom hadn't moved. He was still standing there, watching their departure.

"Jim . . . you said you saw the man who attacked father. You said he was a very big man."

"I know . . . he did resemble Luke. I thought of that when I saw him today, but I can't be sure. However, there's no other man in or around Indian Cove who is as big as he."

"He looks like a brute and if he is—with that size—" she shuddered.

"Probably harmless," Jim said, with a nonchalance he didn't feel. "How'd you find your papa?"

"As you said, he's unconscious and my visit certainly didn't accomplish much except to let me see for myself that he appears to be all right. Also, Dr. Brown reassured me."

"Mind if I ask who was in the house?"

"The only one I saw was Mrs. Tuttle, who invited me to stay for tea. I told her Papa and I sus-

pected Uncle Jabez might be alive. I'd already told that to Elisha, but apparently he hadn't passed the word on. It came as quite a shock to her."

"Good—telling her is just like printing it in a newspaper. It ought to be all over town by midnight, and perhaps whoever is behind this will act. I almost wish they'd hold off a bit, though. I noticed the glass in town. It's been dropping all day. Sky's beginning to look bad, too. Maybe the storm won't break until tomorrow, but the clouds don't look to me as if they'll hold back."

"You, a lobsterman, not able to read the clouds and know just when a storm will break?" she teased.

He chuckled. "I must confess I'm a poor lobsterman."

"Did you see Elisha while I was with Papa?"

"No, but I assure you I didn't look for him. His father wasn't around, either."

She smiled. "Perhaps Elisha was sleeping. I'm sure he wasn't very comfortable last night."

"He wasn't supposed to be," Jim replied. "He was guarding you."

Just before the rig left the dirt road to head for the castle, he brought the horse to a stop and he and Eve looked at the great granite-gray building now silhouetted against a darkening sky.

"Does it frighten you?" he asked, his eyes on the awesome structure.

"No," she replied, her tone thoughtful. "Love built that castle and while my Aunt Elizabeth and Uncle Jabez were alive, love flourished there, so it's not an evil place."

"I agree," he said. "I just wanted to make cer-

tain you wouldn't be afraid there. I'm sure Mrs. Tuttle asked you to stay."

"She did, but I want to be with you—to help solve this mystery—if I can. Oh, Jim, we must."

"We will," he assured her.

"Without being murdered," she said worriedly. "Poor Papa—do you think that groom at the Tuttles' could have been the one who attacked him?"

"If I only knew, I'd have him arrested. I will say the figure looked like him. But that's not proof." He studied the sky again. "Full of mares' tails. Not good. We'd better get a move on. I want a look at that glass in the tower room."

He flicked the reins and the horse trotted along the lane to the stable.

"Jim, with this storm coming on, do you suppose the wreck will be visited tonight?"

"I think they'll risk anything to make a final try for whatever it is they're after. Remember, your father may have seen his attacker. Once he recovers consciousness, it may be too late for them. You better come to the barn with me. I don't want you alone in the castle."

In the barn, he removed the harness and saw to it that there were oats and a bucket of water in the stall. Eve stood just outside, watching the scudding clouds move in from the north.

Jim, finished with his chores, moved up beside her. "Not a good sign," he said, following her gaze.

"Let's go inside," she said, suppressing a shiver, for the air had turned cold. "I want to prepare you something to eat."

"I'll appreciate it," he said, smiling. "First,

though, I want to go up to the tower and take a look at the glass."

"Jim, how many more storms can the *Elizabeth B* survive?"

"Not many, I fear," he replied. "She's already showing signs of breaking up. That's why we have to work fast. Once the ship is gone, all hope of us ever proving it was deliberately wrecked is gone too. I believe our proof lies in the lost log book. It must be hidden aboard somewhere. Otherwise, those intruders wouldn't be bothered boarding it the way they do."

"Then we'd better have a quick meal and go to the tower room to watch."

"That's what I want to do, and we'll have to hurry because it's getting dark."

She unlocked the castle door with a big key, then put it back in her bag, and they entered the reception hall.

Jim said, "I'll run up to the tower room for a look at the barometer and come right down again."

Eve went directly to the kitchen, placed her cape on the back of a chair and moved over to the stove to start a fire. She was engrossed in her task and bending over the stove, applying the match, when she heard a movement behind her and a strong arm suddenly wound around her throat. She tried to scream for help, but the hold cut off her wind and prevented her from making a sound. She couldn't see who it was. Her assailant stood directly behind her and held her in such a position that she was unable to turn her head.

She could feel her lungs reach the bursting

point. In another minute she'd fall into unconsciousness from which she knew she'd never awaken. This attack was murderous and called for all the resistance she could muster.

She drew one foot forward and sent it back in the hardest kick she could manage. Her heel struck a shank bone and the attacker gave a groan of pain. Encouraged, she tried again with a little more success. The hold on her throat relaxed for an instant and she was able to draw a breath and emit a loud scream.

Instantly, she was seized and hurled across the room and into the open pantry. The door was slammed before she could turn around and the pantry lock slid into place. She placed the palms of her hands against her cheeks and screamed again. She heard running steps and she pounded her fists on the door, calling out Jim's name. The bolt turned, the door opened and she flew into his arms.

"What happened?" he asked. "Who locked you in there?"

"I don't know . . . someone very strong. He came up from behind me. I didn't have a chance to get even a glimpse of him."

"I made a fire in the fireplace up there and was just starting down the steps when I heard you scream. But I saw no one, and I can't leave you here alone to search for him outside."

"Thank God, you're always around when these things hap . . ." she broke off and gave him a startled look.

He noticed and understood. "Surely, Eve, you don't think I . . ."

"Forgive me, my darling," she said contritely. "It was Elisha who put such a thought in my head."

He nodded grimly. "I can well believe it. But then, I can't blame him. You are beautiful and could turn the head and capture the heart of any man."

"Oh, Jim." She pressed her face against his chest, drawing comfort in his nearness. "I want only you."

"My dearest Eve." He tilted her face, bent, and touched her lips in a gentle kiss.

It warmed and strengthened her and all fear drained away. She broke off the embrace and smiled up at him. "If you're to eat, I must get busy."

"Sit down first while I see if he did any damage." Jim examined her throat and found no signs of injury. He nodded reassuringly.

"Start the fire in the stove, Jim," she said. "Food will do us both good."

She prepared a substantial meal and they found their appetites ravenous. The soft candlelight coupled with the warmth from the stove served to cheer them, and when she suggested they drink their coffee in the tower room he liked the idea. Using a pot holder, she carried the coffee pot and two mugs to the tower room. Jim brought two lanterns, lighting one to guide them upstairs, extinguishing it as soon as they closed the door behind them. There was no need for it. The glow of the embers in the fireplace was a suitable substitute, sending warmth through the room.

He tapped the barometer and shook his head

dolefully. The prospects were not good. Already, in this high, round room, they could hear the wind beginning to whistle around the walls. Outside, trees were beginning to sway and bend, but so far there was no rain.

Neither was in any mood for idle talk, and the brooding silences of the castle only made the sound of the advancing storm seem more intense. Then, as if to add to the eeriness, lightning began to play across the northern sky. Long streaks of it, carving jagged, brilliant cracks in the sky. If there was accompanying thunder, it was either too far off to be heard or the winds drowned it.

Already she had come to know the sounds of the wind in fine weather for it seemed to adapt itself to the variety of trees on the peninsula. In the tamaracks, it sighed whisperingly, but the firs made it cry out and the ash caused it to hiss through its branches. In the Balm of Gilead there was only a slight rustle. But here, the familiar sounds changed to alternating shrieks and roars of fury as it cut around the corners of the building, rattling the windows and french doors until it seemed all the demons of Hell were after them.

The castle may not have been old, but it was built to simulate age and it was brooding and dark. During her brief residence, it had come to mean danger and unaccountable happenings. In the past few hours, it had brought bloodshed and violence.

Jim sat beside the fireplace and Eve was curled up on a cushion in front of it. They sipped their

coffee, and every few minutes he would get up and go over to peer through the telescope.

"I can see the wreck clearly enough because the rain hasn't started yet, but so far no lights, blue or otherwise. I still say if they're searching for something aboard the *Elizabeth B*, they'll go after it tonight."

"Jim, the ship must have been searched a dozen or more times."

"I know, which means Cap'n Jabez hid well whatever they're hunting, and I think it must be the log book. That's where we might find the answer to everything—if we can find it."

"Let's hope we do know all the answers before Papa wakes up. I dread having him come back here with that would-be murderer loose."

"I know. I dread having you here with him loose."

"I'm not afraid with you around," she said stoutly.

He smiled in admiration of her courage. "Thanks, Eve. I'm going to stay close by you from now on, because whoever the attacker is, he has access to this castle."

Her brow furrowed thoughtfully. "I forgot to tell you of an incident which occurred last night at the Tuttles'."

She told him of being accosted by Mrs. Hartley —of her demanding a settlement for the loss of her husband on the *Elizabeth B*.

"I know the poor soul is demented, but it was a frightening experience. Sometimes I think it's all hopeless and the best thing Papa and I can do is clear out."

"Which is what they've been trying to make you do, Eve. If you give in to them now, they'll have won. Think back on the other events which seemed to be impossible of solution. The full wood-box in the kitchen, this room in livable condition, the tobacco smoke and warm pipe, the mysterious lights in this room. They were cleared up. I was responsible for all of them."

He went over to the 'scope again, looked through it for a few moments, then resumed his chair. The pot of coffee resting on the hearth was still hot. She poured him another cup and handed it to him. The embers in the fireplace were almost out and the room was almost in darkness, for they wanted no light to reflect on the windows to be seen by anyone aboard the derelict.

He sipped the coffee and abruptly changed the tenor of the conversation by talking of his plans, of his experiences in medical school, of the hospital where he worked in New Haven. From time to time, he'd return to the telescope, until finally, just after eight o'clock, he stepped before it and kept it trained on the wreck.

"If they're coming, it will be now," he said. "There's a let-up in the wind, but don't let that fool you. It'll blow harder than ever within the next hour or so. Wait now! I think . . ."

She saw his body tense. She arose and went over to stand beside him.

"Is there something?" she asked breathlessly.

"Yes," he said, still peering through the 'scope. "Those blue lights you spoke of. I admit they're strange, but we're soon going to know what they are. This time I'm prepared."

He stepped back from the 'scope, unbuttoned his coat, and showed her the butt of a heavy revolver stuck down under his waistband. He picked up both the lanterns, opened the stairway door, and paused on the top step while he lit them.

She took one, and they moved swiftly down the stairs and through the castle. She went to the kitchen, slipped her cape around her shoulders, and returned to the hall where Jim awaited her. She started to move to the door, but he gripped her arm, holding her back.

"Are you certain, Eve, you want to go?"

"Very certain," she replied firmly. "I wouldn't stay alone in the castle for anything."

"I wouldn't want you to." His face showed the concern he felt. "But I should have left you with the Tuttles."

"No," she argued. "I want to solve this mystery as much as you. I insist on going with you."

He nodded understandingly and blew out the lanterns. Still carrying them, they moved out into the storm. He placed an arm around her, guiding her skillfully along the path so that, despite the buffeting wind and stinging rain, they were at the beach in quick time. His large fluke was hauled up on shore, its anchor driven deep into the sand and rocks. He freed the anchor as she got aboard, pushed the craft into water until it was free of the sand, leaped aboard and started to row.

The rain grew heavier and the wind increased. It was a night for heavy slickers and fisherman's hats, but they had neither. Both of them were soaked by the time he had rounded the stern of the wrecked ship.

He motioned her to lean forward. She put her ear against his lips.

"There's no dory, no boat of any kind out here, but there's somebody aboard all right." He had to shout to be heard above the storm.

"What if they cut your boat loose?" she shouted back.

"We can't stop them, but they won't use it. I'm going to take the oars on board with us. Hang on now—we're going to bump."

She was jarred by the force of the collision between the fluke and the hull of the wreck. The sea had driven them hard. He quickly made the fluke fast to the rope ladder, and then he shouted in her ear again.

"I'll go first. Hand me up the lanterns, then the oars, then come aboard. Be careful. Don't get thrown overside."

She nodded, pushed back her water-soaked hair and took a firm hold on the oars. He scrambled up the rope ladder. As he neared the top, he stopped, held on with one hand and drew the pistol. He scanned the deck, saw no one, climbed over the rail and signaled her to pass up the lanterns and oars.

When she reached the rail, he lifted her over and put an arm around her while they stood surveying the deck, which had changed in only one respect since the last time they were aboard. A small dory was lashed to the forward deck. Someone was aboard, and whoever it was had made certain he wouldn't be stranded.

The wind and rain made it impossible to hear anyone's movements. They could only begin a

search of the vessel and be alert every second against danger.

Then, far aft, they saw a blue light. By its motion, a human hand carried it, and some of the fear went out of her. Jim started toward the source of the strange light. He and Eve moved up the slanted deck. There was no chance to surprise whoever held the light, for there was only the open deck between them.

Suddenly the light stopped its bobbing. There was a faint shout as if whoever held it was shouting in defiance. Then the light moved again, straight at them, and it seemed to be flying through the air.

Then a shadowy form materialized out of the gloom and rain. The figure of a heavy-set man. Jim aimed and fired, sending the bullet just above the man's head. It slammed into the deck rail behind him.

The man dropped the light and made a wild retreat. He'd apparently expected no resistance from the point of a gun. Jim and Eve moved up to where the blue light had dropped on the deck. It was sliding down the slanted incline slowly, but he was able to intercept it. He held it up and she looked at an ordinary whale oil lantern provided with a blue glass.

"Your ghost!" he shouted above the storm.

She hugged his arm and nodded, pushing her hair out of her eyes again. He led her toward the main salon into which the heavy-set man had apparently vanished.

The door was missing, the glass gone, but even so the salon gave them a slight protection from the

wind and rain. Jim lit his lantern and Eve's, discarding the blue one. Now they could see the emptiness of the salon. They moved toward the companionway to the first-class cabins.

He took the lead now, gun ready, lantern held high. The storm was rapidly growing worse and the wreck was beginning to shudder, as if in anticipation of its destruction. Later, she wondered how she'd heard the scraping sound above the noise of the wind and waves, but it came from above her and she looked up.

The heavy-set man had not entered the salon, but had hidden somewhere and then made his way to the salon roof. He was now crouched and poised to jump straight down on Jim from the skylight opening.

"Jim!" Eve screamed. "Look out above!"

THIRTEEN

Before Jim could jump aside and raise his gun, the big man landed on his shoulders, bearing him to the slippery deck. Jim threw the gun in Eve's direction, but it skittered across the deck and became lost in the shadowy recesses of the salon. There was no time to hunt for it. She ran to where the two men struggled and, using the lantern, began to crash it down on the man's head and shoulders. It was ineffectual and he seemed unbothered by the rain of blows. The lantern went out, some of the oil sloshed over him, but he had Jim pinned

to the deck. He gripped Jim's clothing and pulled him to his feet. Then he began a pinwheel turn. Eve screamed in horror as he threw Jim across the salon and against one of its walls. Jim slid down and didn't move.

She backed away, then remembered the gun and tried frantically but unsuccessfully to find it in the darkness. She thought she heard voices and turned to see another man come out of the companionway and go rushing madly across the deck and on out of the salon. The big man followed, but he moved more slowly. He hesitated for a second, as if contemplating finishing off Jim and perhaps doing the same to her, but apparently he had orders to waste no time. He disappeared onto the main deck.

She rushed to where Jim lay and knelt beside him. She turned him on his back and he groaned and opened his eyes, but closed them quickly when the rain splattered into them. With her help, he managed to stand up, but he was unsteady and needed the salon wall to lean against.

Neither could talk. The storm was rising very rapidly now, making converstaion impossible.

He finally regained his balance and his wits and drew her close. "I'm all right. I don't know why, but I am. Did you see him?"

"Yes . . . it was Luke. The Tuttles' head groom."

"Even if I hadn't got a look at his face," Jim rubbed a slightly swollen jaw, "I'd have known him for the kind of weight and strength he threw around."

"Jim . . . there was another man too."

"I thought there might be. Luke's too addle-headed to do much more than use his strength. Who was the second man?"

"I couldn't tell. He wore a slicker and a fisherman's hat and it was so dark and raining so hard and . . . and . . . I was so terrified—I thought you'd been killed . . ."

She suddenly broke down and began to cry. His arms, around her, tightened as he soothed her with words and gentle kisses. She finally shook off the fear and desperation.

"I'm all right now, Jim," she said, smiling up at him.

"Good. Let's see if we can find a lantern."

It wasn't easy in the dark, but she remembered where she'd dropped the one she'd used as a weapon. She found it, saw the glass was still intact and got it lit. Jim saw the glint of the revolver he'd thrown aside and promptly retrieved it from the deck. He took the lantern from her hand.

"Stay here. Just for a minute or two while I have a look around."

He went hurrying along the deck, but she couldn't let him go alone. Her eyes caught the gleam of the second lantern. She lit it and, holding it high, followed him on deck. He was bending over the rail, peering down at the sea which pounded the hull and threatened to soon sweep over the ship.

He saw her light and turned quickly, the gun half raised. He lowered it and waited for her to approach. The howling gale prevented any hope of conversation. He pointed to the place on deck where the dory had been lashed. It was gone.

Then he indicated where he'd placed his oars, safely he'd hoped. He made motions with his hands to indicate they were gone too. Then he held the lantern over the rail and pulled up on the rope ladder. When it raised easily, she realized their own boat was gone and they were trapped on this hulk in the middle of a storm which might destroy it and them.

She tapped his arm and pointed toward the salon. He nodded, took her arm, and they slithered up the slanted deck to the salon door, crossed to the companionway and went down to the first class cabins. There, at least, it was dry and the fury of the storm was smothered.

"We're left high, but not very dry." He tried to make a joke of it. "Things could be worse. So far, the ship seems to be holding together."

"I've been through too much to be afraid again," she told him. "With you . . . I can face anything. Tell me the truth, Jim. Will we get out of this?"

"If the wreck holds together, of course we will. If she starts to break up or slip off the rocks, we can still fashion some kind of a raft and paddle ashore. We're not licked, by a long shot."

"Then let's see if we can find what they were looking for. Unless it was a small object, they apparently didn't find it, because neither of those men carried anything except a blue lantern."

"That part's solved, anyway. They used blue glass because they figured the light wouldn't be seen for as long a distance as a yellow light. Maybe that was true. No one else saw them."

"Once I saw them from the point, but mostly it was from the tower room."

"The second man came from this companion-way?"

"Yes . . . and he was in a great hurry."

"Whatever they're after must be in Jabez's cabin. We'll have a look, but first I'm going to find a supply of good lumber we can lash together for a raft. That furniture in the captain's cabin looks as if it might do."

They hurried to the cabin, set their lanterns at advantageous places, and he went to work. They were, at least, grateful for the protection the cabin offered. Now and then the ship creaked ominously and three times it gave those shudders as if it had moved and was preparing to slip off the reef. It would go down in three or four minutes once it was free.

He tried not to think of that. He had no tools, but he managed to wrench a stout leg off a broken chair and, using this as a lever, he pried at some loose boards forming the top of the map-reading table. With one substantial board loose, he was able to harvest more of them. He needed cross pieces now, to retain the lashings, and he attacked Jabez's built-in desk.

It resisted his efforts, and he savagely tore out a thick drawer and prepared to hurl it into a corner. But he hesitated and hefted the drawer. He laid it on the desk and examined it. The sides were of ordinary thickness, but the bottom seemed to be heavier than usual. He raised the drawer and smashed it against a corner of the desk. The

wood splintered but held. He brought a lantern over to better see what he was doing. Through the splintered and broken bottom, he caught a glimpse of dull metal.

He smashed the drawer on the desk corner again until it broke away and he was holding a thin book with covers of heavy lead. Eve pressed closer, Jim opened the book, and she tilted a lantern so they might see what they found.

"It's the log," he said, "or pages from it. It's weighted so if the ship ever sank, this log wouldn't float. Or if the ship was stopped, Jabez could throw it overboard." He tilted the pages toward the light. "Look . . . look . . . a full account . . . she was a slave ship until the war seemed sure to begin. Then she turned smuggler. Eve, she carried contrabrand to the Confederacy, gold to England, cotton to the northern mills. Jabez played no favorites . . . this was big business and he lists his profits . . . Eve . . . he shared them with Howard Tuttle. It's right here in Jabez's writing. All of it . . . Tuttle was as much involved as Jabez, and Tuttle had helped finance the building of this schooner."

She caught at his arm. "Papa is sick and helpless in the Tuttle home. Jim . . . if they want to kill him . . . it would be so easy now . . ."

"No . . . they won't try that. Tuttle has no idea we found the log. Maybe he was on board with Luke. Most likely it was him, but they either gave up or we scared them off. All this time they must have been opening and closing this drawer and never suspecting it was built right around this log book. Jabez must have sensed . . . wait . . .

we don't know what happened to the ship. Maybe Jabez managed to write something . . ."

He opened the book to the final pages, and there it was.

> Howard Tuttle owns half this ship and took half the profits, keeping my share in trust until I wanted it. But I was a fool to trust him. He wants it all. He arranged this voyage knowing we'd run into the storm, but he insisted we sail anyway. Now someone's cut the rudder ropes and she won't answer to the wheel. Can't make repairs . . . storm's too thick. We're heeling over . . . bound to hit the reef . . . Tuttle is as much a scoundrel as me. Twice as great a one because he has my money, a hundred and twelve thousand dollars . . . may his soul burn and shrivel . . .

Eve shook her head slowly in sadness. "Poor Uncle Jabez."

"When the truth comes out," Jim said grimly, "you'll probably find Jabez borrowed from Tuttle, got in over his head and tried to get out this way. And Tuttle . . . with his clever ways and his smooth tongue."

"And all the money he gave away. It was Jabez's money, no doubt. He even wanted to become a Senator, Jim. What sort of man is he, to arrange things like this and yet entertain lavishly, go about with his head high . . . ?"

Jim motioned her to silence. He moved toward the cabin door and looked out. At first, he thought

the drenching rain had seeped through and created what seemed to be a growing fog in the corridor. Then his nostrils quivered and a fresh wave of horror came over him.

"Eve," he said tensely. "Eve . . . they set this wreck on fire."

He handed her his lantern and indicated she was to carry both of them. He hoisted as many of the boards as possible over his shoulder, and they struggled up to the salon. Smoke was pouring out of the hatches and the companionway to the hold.

Now, in the teeth of the storm, it was difficult to talk, so neither tried. The rain pelted down on them again, and it had grown much colder, so that they were afflicted with constant shivers and the chill penetrated deeply.

He worked inside the salon where there was at least some protection. He laid out the boards, placed the cross pieces on top of them and then motioned that she was to remain. He ran and slid across the deck, heading aft as fast as he could go. When he returned, he carried a coil of thin rope over his shoulder. Eve surmised it came from some supply chest, but Jim was unable to tell her anything because of the howling gale.

He began to lash the boards together At best it was going to be a very flimsy craft. The light wood of which it was constructed had one advantage. It would very likely float better than a heavier raft, but it might break up far more quickly. There was no alternative. It was this or attempt to swim, and in this gale that would be fatal.

Jim knew this very well, and he worked fran-

tically while a savage fury arose in him. At that moment, he wanted to kill Howard Tuttle, to take him with his bare hands and throttle him to death.

Once Eve made a dangerous trip across the tilted deck, falling twice, the last time being swept down against the rail so hard she lost her breath. The sea was rising rapidly, washing the deck higher and higher, slamming into the ship with more and more fury. Below, the *Elizabeth B* was on fire. So far it hadn't spread, but the smoke was thicker than ever, and when she reached the hatch she could look through the swirls of smoke and see tongues of flame.

The fire had caught and was licking at the half-rotted craft. Once the teeth of the gale swept it, the flames would leap higher and burn faster. She rushed back to the salon and managed to tell Jim how desperate their situation was.

He pushed the half-finished raft onto the main deck before it got too large to pass through the salon door. Kneeling, he worked frantically again. His fingers bled from slivers and cuts, but the rain washed them clean and he paid no attention to the pain. She tried to help, but was unable to cope with this work.

Fifteen minutes later, he had the craft finished, but even she saw how flimsy it was. If the sea hurled it against the hull just once, it would smash to kindling.

They had no oars, but he had brought along two lengths of flat wood which might serve as paddles. He tied these onto the raft and dragged the whole thing over to the seaward rail.

There was a roaring explosion aft. A hatch

cover blew open and the fire reached out to lick at the deck while more flame ate at the dry underside. The cargo space must be one mass of flame now. In a short time, the interior of the ship would be a gigantic torch, until the structure was so weakened the wreck would either break to pieces or come free and dive for the bottom.

He tied a length of rope to the raft, hoisted it overside and lowered it quickly. He tied the other end of the rope to the rail. Then he turned to Eve, huddled against the storm and shivering with cold. He drew her close to him and kissed her tenderly. She knew the message in that kiss. It could very well be their last, but she was no longer afraid. She felt at peace because she loved this man and trusted him. If their luck failed, they'd die together. She would have had it no other way.

"I love you!" she shouted. He couldn't hear the words, but he read her lips and he smiled and repeated the three magic words so that she too understood. Then he climbed over the rail, took a last look at the now-flaming ship, made certain the log was safely under his shirt. Then he started down the rope ladder.

The raft had drifted out the length of the restraining rope and he pulled it closer to the hull. It was partly awash and looked flimsier than ever as the sea tossed it about like an eggshell.

But when he placed his weight on it, the buoyancy held. He lowered himself completely and tugged gently on the rope for her to hurry. She joined him and he untied the paddles he'd lashed to the craft. Then he freed the raft. He knelt in

water up to his waist while she clung to the raft with both hands.

He used the paddle as a pole, pushing it against the hull of the doomed schooner, but when they rounded the stern, the sea caught them greedily and the raft went sweeping up into the maw of a huge wave.

She held on as tightly as possible, bracing herself against the force of the sea. Jim tried to kneel again, but it was impossible. He had to lie flat or be washed overside, and it was useless to try using the paddles in that position. Any confidence he had possessed ran out as they were pitched and tossed by the storm. He half wished they'd never left the ship, even if it was now burning fiercely enough to light the sea and show them how high it was running and how bad.

FOURTEEN

It looked hopeless. They were making no headway toward shore and the flimsy raft was showing signs of falling apart. Jim tried again to stand that he might ply his paddle, but he was in too great danger of being swept overside. The wreck, instead of being behind them as it should have been, was now in front. Between them and the shore. They were losing ground, and the craft couldn't stay together more than another few minutes.

He wanted to tell Eve how much he loved her, how sorry he was that he'd allowed her to come out to the wreck with him, how sorry he was for everything that had resulted in this—an end to all things, even their love.

The flaming ship threw brighter light as the fire spread and defied the gale and the sea to extinguish it. He was about ready to hurl the ineffectual paddle into the sea and swim for it with Eve, when he saw the prow of his own fluke come out of the squall and slide into the illuminated area. A man was bending over the oars, rowing with frantic speed, trying to hold the craft on course.

He looked over his shoulder once, and in the wildness of the fire reflected against the outer edges of the squall, Jim and Eve both recognized him as Elisha Tuttle, his face gone perfectly white.

Jim waited until the fluke was closer. Then he grasped Eve, lifted her as the raft sank beneath them and threw her into the boat. The raft gave a violent upsurge and disintegrated under his feet, throwing him into the sea amidst the pitching wooden boards. He clawed for the edge of the fluke, and his hand secured a grip. Eve grasped him by the wrist. He gave one vigorous haul and fell half in, half out of the boat, as if he'd expended his last ounce of strength.

Elisha shipped the oars for one dangerous moment, joined Eve, and together they pulled him into the boat. Elisha then returned to the oars and worked frantically to keep the boat from swamping while he rowed toward shore, very

slowly gaining on the storm, but not yet out of danger.

The sail was down, for it would have been torn to pieces, and the craft was a heavy one. He began losing headway. They were almost at the beach when the fluke was tossed by a wave, sent reeling out to sea again.

Jim raised his face to the pelting rain and let it hit him hard. He opened his mouth and drank some of the water, and then he joined Elisha. Knowing his own boat, Jim took over and left Elisha to steer. It required twenty minutes of hard work to hit the beach—a job which, in a calm sea, could have been done in two minutes—but finally the hull ground against the rocks and the sand.

Eve leaped out, getting wet to her waist without heed. Elisha was next, and finally Jim, who seized a rope on his way. All three of them hauled away to drag the fluke well onto the beach where it would be safe.

Now, for the first time, they could watch the destruction of the schooner as fire tore at her hull and the sea and storm began to slash at her weakened structure.

"I'm glad it'll go down," Elisha said with half a sob. "It's meant nothing but anguish and fear to us."

"I can't hear you," Eve shouted.

He made a helpless gesture and pointed to the castle, then took her arm as Jim led the way from the beach to the path. At last they were inside, where Jim immediately lit both fireplaces in the entrance hall.

Eve said, "I'm sure Papa's clothes will fit you, Jim. You'll catch your death if you don't change."

He lit two lamps which were on the table, handed one to her, and they went upstairs. She led him to her father's room, pointed out the closet, then moved across the hall to her own.

In a short time, she came downstairs, looking hoydenish in a red skirt and white blouse, with a turkish towel wound turban-like around her head.

Jim, already there, was standing with Elisha before the now-blazing fires, absorbing their heat. They led her to the kitchen, where they had the stove going and a pot of coffee boiling.

"Elisha has told me a great deal," Jim said. Everything's cleared up—or almost everything. The only incident that remains a mystery is the attack on your father and on you. Elisha swears Luke wasn't responsible, and I believe him."

"Thank you, Elisha." Eve spoke with deep sincerity. "We would have died without your help."

"A thing like this," he said bitterly, "can go so far and no further. There's no use trying to hide anything now. Jim told me you found the log. It's true that my father was a partner in everything Jabez did. Slavery, smuggling, treason if you like—because they helped the Confederacy if there was a profit in it. You have to understand father. He likes power, and that takes money. He likes influential friends. They're expensive too. He likes to make himself out a great man, and that's the most expensive of all. He had a great deal of Jabez's money and . . . he kept it."

"What made you change?" Jim asked.

"When Luke set a fire in the hold, that was too much. I didn't know about it until we'd left you stranded on the ship and we were ashore. Then I was able to see the first of the flames. I told Luke to go back to the house. As soon as he was gone, I set out to find you in your fluke, which we'd run up on shore."

"Whatever you did before," Eve said graciously, "is wiped out. We're grateful to you, and I hope we can now help you."

Elisha bent his head and ran his fingers through his matted hair. "I'm glad it's over. Father couldn't sleep or think of anything except getting his hands on the log, because Jabez began to suspect him and told him if anything happened the truth would get out. We searched the ship inch by inch ten times. When Jim told me where the log was hidden, I laughed out loud. I'd taken that drawer out of the desk ten or more times and I mentioned twice that it seemed very heavy. Father told me not to be silly. The log was too thick to be concealed in the bottom of a desk drawer. He never once thought that Jabez may have placed only the essential pages between those lead sheets and destroyed the rest of it. But nobody argues with Father."

"He's a hypocritical old buzzard," Jim said. "He was actually going to make a bid for the United States Senatorship. Can you imagine that? A slaver, smuggler, traitor. He doesn't deserve any sympathy."

Elisha raised his head. "I've lost all respect for him. Now I think we'd best go to my house and make sure Eve's father is all right. There's no tell-

ing what Luke has said to my father about me, and they may suspect I rescued you, or died trying."

"Do you think they'd harm my father?" Eve asked anxiously.

"Eve, I doubt it, but Father is beside himself. He knows what will happen to him if the truth gets out, and that makes him a desperate man."

"Let's hitch up the rig," Jim said, "and start for town. Eve, it's my opinion that you should stay here and not risk going out into any more wet and cold. There's no longer anything to fear. You're quite safe."

"I know. Both of you, hurry. If Papa has recovered enough, bring him here—please. I can take care of him. Don't worry about me, just go and see that Papa is all right."

Elisha hurried out to hitch up the rig. Jim took both of Eve's hands for a moment, and then he kissed her tenderly.

"Your father won't be harmed," he said. "Not even Howard Tutle is fool enough to try that now."

"Just bring him back if you can, Jim. I'm all right. I only wish to be certain my father is."

"Lock the doors anyway," he advised. "Don't go outside under any circumstances. This storm may get worse."

"I promise I'll only get Papa's room ready."

Outside, Elisha shouted a call for Jim above the storm. He kissed Eve quickly and rushed out. He climbed onto the rig and Elisha touched the flank

of the horse with the whip. The rig rolled fast toward town.

"I've been an addle-headed idiot," Elisha said. "I should have made Father stop all this long ago. He simply became obsessed with finding the log and saving his own skin. No one could reason with him. The instance of the blue lanterns is one example. He read somewhere that blue light can't be seen from any distance, so we had to get blue glass for the lanterns. Yet Eve saw the light. So did I—and Father wouldn't believe me."

"Elisha, did you tell the truth about Luke not being responsible for the attack on Professor Warren and on Eve?"

"I swear it. After Eve and her father left, the night of the party, Luke didn't go off our estate."

"I saw someone who looked like him running away into the darkness. I'd have sworn it was Luke, because no one else hereabouts is as big a man as the one I saw."

"Luke would lie about it to save his own skin," Elisha admitted, "but that night he told the truth."

The rig skidded once and almost turned over, for the dirt road was washed out in spots and slippery in others, but it stayed on its wheels and they lost little time. Then they were moving down the village street toward the Tuttle home. While Elisha tied the horse to the hitch rack, Jim rushed through the rain onto the porch.

Mrs. Tuttle opened the door for him, but she turned away and didn't speak. The news had already reached the household by way of Luke.

"Is the Professor all right?" Jim asked.

"Yes . . . he's conscious. I . . . is Elisha . . .?"

"He's outside," Jim told her. "He's a fine man, Mrs. Tuttle, and a friend of mine for life. You can be proud of him."

Mrs. Tuttle motioned to the stairway. "The Professor is in the bedroom at the end of the hall."

Jim hurried to the second floor where Warren was now propped up in bed. He was weak, but fully cognizant of what was going on.

"It's finished," Jim told him. "We found the log. The wreck was burning the last I saw, and it will likely disappear by morning. Eve's fine. She's very worried about you."

"I'll be all right," Warren said confidently. "Everything has been explained to me. Just as soon as the constable finds Ned Hartley's widow . . ."

Jim felt the first twinges of apprehension. "What about her, Professor?"

"She attacked me. She claimed Jabez was responsible for the death of her husband and I either had to pay her compensation or she'd kill me. Apparently she had a key to the castle, because she took me quite by surprise. Where's Eve? I'd like to see her."

"She'll see you presently," Jim said. "I'll be back soon, too."

Without another word of explanation he fled from the house, untied the rig, climbed in and sent the already-weary horse on its fastest journey to the castle.

Of course it had been that woman! He should have known, but he couldn't bring himself to

associate any woman with the two murderous attacks. She was mad, certainly, but that didn't make her any the less dangerous. He called himself every kind of fool for leaving Eve alone.

FIFTEEN

Eve added more wood to the kitchen fire, lit another lamp and went to her father's bedroom. In the expectation that he might return with Jim, she lit the fireplace, made up the bed and lit the lamp by his bedside.

Then she returned to the kitchen, washed the cups and saucers and sat down at the table. She was thinking about the burning of the wrecked ship and of their narrow escape from death when the kitchen door leading to the path to the stable was suddenly hurled open.

The rain, wind and storm came whipping inside, and on the heels of this came the huge woman Eve had last seen at the Tuttle party.

She wore a man's boots and trousers, a great-coat and a floppy man's hat. Her normally ugly face was creased in a deep scowl of vast hatred.

"So I've got you again, at last," she said, her eyes gleaming in madness. "Oh, I know those two young men have gone. I know you're alone. Now I want money. I want lots of money to pay for Ned's gettin' hisself killed on account of your uncle. There was lots of money left be-

sides this castle. I figure on havin' my share or I'll kill you. Now don't move. Stay right where you are and tell me where the money's hid."

Eve knew she'd never reach either the outside door or the passageway leading to the front door without being intercepted. The woman was obviously insane, but she was still shrewd and highly suspicious.

"Mrs. Hartley," Eve said in a voice she hoped was steady. "You're wrong. There was no need to hurt my father. You did hit him, didn't you?"

" 'Course I did. Told him to come across with the money and he said there wasn't any, so I hit him. He's dead, ain't he?"

Eve didn't answer the question. "It was you who tried to choke me, wasn't it, Mrs. Hartley?"

"Just like I'll do now if you don't give me the money that's mine."

Eve was playing for time and an opportunity to get away from this woman. She often wondered, afterward, if she could have faced up to the situation as she did if she hadn't been through all the terrors and anxieties stemming from the mystery which had surrounded the castle.

"I'll give you the money, but first I have to know why you think Ned is entitled to it. What did he do, Mrs. Hartley, that makes his services so valuable?"

"He cut the rudder ropes, that's what he did, so the ship wouldn't answer the helm and heel over in the storm. He did like Cap'n Jabez asked him to do, and he's to be paid for it. Or I am, seein' I'm all that's left."

"But Mrs. Hartley, why would Captain Jabez

want the rudder ropes cut when he was aboard the ship? That would be foolish. Neither he nor anybody else got off."

"Ned was supposed to. I dunno what happened to him, but he was supposed to cut the rudder ropes and get clear. Then he'd be paid . . ."

"Isn't it true that Mr. Tuttle ordered Ned to do this? And it's Howard Tuttle who actually owed you the money."

"It was Cap'n Jabez, that's who."

"Mrs. Hartley, I can show you the log book of the *Elizabeth B*. It tells how Jabez didn't even know what had happened when the ship heeled over, as you say. Howard Tuttle planned this and used your husband."

"No . . . Tuttle says I'm right and I should keep on tryin' to get my money. He treats me fine. He told me to make your pa pay up. When he didn't, I kilt him, then there was you and I want my money. I want it now."

"It's hidden in another room," Eve said. "If you'll let me go, I'll show you where."

"Don't you try any tricks with me. If you do, I'll kill you anyway, money or no money. Just walk ahead slow."

Eve knew she was completely dependent upon herself to get away from this woman or, at least, keep her from getting too close until Jim returned. That would take a long time. He would hardly be in town by now, and suspecting nothing, he wouldn't hurry. It was up to her. She held her life in her hands.

She led the way into the reception hall. There

she stopped and faced the threatening woman who had followed close behind her.

"You hated the *Elizabeth B*, didn't you?"

"I hated any ship that sank under Ned's feet."

"Then you might like to watch it burn. It's been on fire for an hour or more and it may even have slipped off the rocks and sunk by now."

"Good! I'm glad she's goin' under. Every time I saw that schooner out there, I thought of Ned and how I been cheated. But no more. Mr. Tuttle, he says go get your money or get satisfaction and I'm goin' to do just that. Where's the money? I don't care about the fire."

"It's hidden behind the big portrait of Captain Jabez's wife in the sitting room. You can see for yourself."

Mrs. Hartley pushed Eve aside, picked up a lamp from the table in the hall, motioning with it for Eve to move along with her. But in her cupidity and greed, she forgot about the girl when they reached the sitting room. She held up the lamp to send its light around the room, caught a glimpse of the portrait and went straight to it. Eve moved back to the door, being as quiet as possible. Once beyond it, she moved swiftly along the reception hall to the stairway. She heard a crash as Mrs. Hartley removed the portrait from the wall and either dropped it or smashed it to hunt for the money that wasn't there.

At the landing, Eve paused. Where could she go? Locking herself into one of those rooms wouldn't stop this woman. She was strong enough to batter the door down. But the tower room door was stouter, as she recalled. She might be safe

there, at least temporarily. She ran down the corridor. Before she was halfway to the tower room staircase, she heard Mrs. Hartley bellow in frustrated rage.

Then Eve heard her pounding up the stairs. She managed to reach the tower room before Mrs. Hartley came to a stop on the landing and stood there trying to determine which room Eve had gone into. She methodically began to search them all, fortunately heading into the farther wing first.

Eve thought about taking a chance on reaching the entrance hall, but the risk was too great. All she could do was try to barricade herself in the tower room.

She closed and locked the door, moved heavy furniture in front of it, piling it up the best she could. There wasn't much else to do. She had no doubt but that Mrs. Hartley would find the room soon, and it seemed a certainty that she possessed the physical strength to batter down the door. Eve could go no farther. She was trapped here, with no other place to go. Nowhere to hide.

If she only had some sort of weapon. If only Jim had left his pistol with her. Frantically, she searched for a gun—or anything to be used as a weapon. She found nothing, and now she could hear Mrs. Hartley wheezing as she came up the stairs.

She pounded on the door. "Open up! If I have to bust it down, I'll kill you right off."

Eve remained silent. Perhaps the mad woman would think her would-be victim had somehow escaped. But Mrs. Hartley had a one-track mind

and it told her Eve had to be in the tower room, so she was going to find a way to get in.

Her heavy fists banged on the door until it rattled. Then she set her massive shoulder against it and shoved. The door held, but when she drew back and threw herself at the door, it splintered after the first assault.

Eve realized there was no way to appease this woman after having tricked her once. Nothing she could say would help. Mrs. Hartley was going to kill her in this frenzy of insanity. Eve could not resist long, couldn't escape in any manner, and there was no chance of help arriving.

Outside the storm was still running high, shrieking through the trees and around the circular room. Eve backed toward the telescope. She gave one swift glance out of the french window and saw the dull glow of the burning ship. It seemed impossible it could still be afire, for it seemed hours since she'd left it. But then she knew it hadn't really been long.

Maybe Jim would be on his way back by now, but in this rain and wind it would take more time than she had left. To have it end like this after all she'd gone through. She resolved to put up as much of a battle as possible and she picked up an iron fireplace poker from the hearth. Mrs. Hartley might succeed in killing her, but she was determined to defend herself, though she knew she couldn't best the woman.

The door was breaking down under the repeated assaults, and each time the woman hit the panels she seemed to have gained more strength in her mounting rage.

The door crashed in. Mrs. Hartley tore away the debris, shoved the furniture aside and entered. She was completely mad. She'd listen to no pleas for mercy; the weak resistance Eve might offer wouldn't delay things a matter of seconds.

Behind her, the french doors rattled as the wind tore at them. Then she remembered this was an exit. Jim had used it. The descent would probably be impossible in the teeth of this storm, but it was better to try that than let this woman beat her to death.

Eve turned and flung the doors open. Mrs. Hartley gave a wild yell of rage, but Eve was already on the little balcony and climbing over it. In the darkness she had to guess where the foothold was, where the parapet was located, but she extended her leg, moved it until her shoe struck the granite block. She tested her weight upon it, let go of the balcony rail just as the mad woman made a wild grab for her hands.

Eve was whipped by the rain and the wind, but she held on, visualizing just how that parapet had looked in daylight. About a dozen steps and she'd find the huge tree and the strong branch over which Jim had clambered.

She saw with horror that Mrs. Hartley was now climbing over the rail too, undaunted by the storm, determined not to let Eve get away.

The branch was in violent motion and almost swept Eve off the parapet, but fortunately the lamp in the tower room had been set on a table close by the window overlooking the branch so she could see it faintly—just before the storm

bowled the lamp over and extinguished the flame.

But she knew where the branch was now. She made a grab for it. Her fingers closed around a fat limb and her nails gripped into the bark. She was suddenly swept off the parapet as the branch was torn by the wind, but she held on and inched her way slowly back toward the junction of the branch and the stout trunk.

There she clung desperately, wondering how she'd ever get down in the dark without falling. It was a long distance to the ground from this point.

She could hear Mrs. Hartley shouting in rage, but the wind finally drowned her out. The woman was still inching her way along the parapet, clinging to the rough granite wall. She was opposite the point where the thick branch offered a way down. She could see it dimly. She leaped for it as the hissing wind blew it aside. Mrs. Hartley began a plunge to the ground. Her scream arose above the wildness of the wind and then it was cut off abruptly.

Eve closed her eyes and wept for the woman. When the terror abated, she began to climb down. She was well on her way to the ground when she heard Jim's voice shouting. She answered him and made herself heard finally.

A moment later, she was in his arms, but her knees buckled and she collapsed against him. He picked her up and walked around the castle to the front door.

He let himself in, carrying her across the threshold. He continued on up the stairs to her room, where he gently deposited her on the bed. Then

he began to murmur her name and rub her hands.

When she opened her eyes, the room was bright with lamplight and she saw Jim bending over her. He bent closer and their lips met, and she managed to raise a hand and caress his face.

"Eve, it was all my fault . . ."

"No . . . no . . . how could you have known? Father . . . ?"

"He's fine. I'll bring him home in the morning. I came as quickly as I could . . . Mrs. Hartley is the one who tried to kill your father . . ."

"She's . . . at the foot of the big tree. She was trying to kill me and she slipped, or missed getting hold of the branch. She went down. She must be dead."

"If she fell out of that tree, she's dead," he said. "Don't think about her. I'll go see in a moment. Get out of those wet clothes and tuck yourself in bed. I'll be back soon."

When he returned, after finding Mrs. Hartley with a broken neck, he sat down on the edge of the bed.

"It's finished, Eve. All over. There'll be nothing here but peace and quiet from now on."

"All I wish is that you'll be here, Jim," she said.

"I'll stay the balance of the summer. In six months I'll have finished my training and I'll go into private practice. Right here in Indian Cove, if you and your father are going to stay."

"It doesn't make any difference where we are," she said. "So long as we're together. A room near your office, or a castle, it's all the same to me."

"Imagine," he said with one of his amiable grins, "having a girl like you and a choice like that. A castle! But then, you deserve it. Even a castle's not good enough for you."

"Come closer," she said, "and tell me that again, Jim darling. I'm still shaking. Drive away the fear. Let me tell you how much I love you and I'll stop trembling soon. All I want, darling, is you."

THE TOWER TERROR

The castle was a wedding present from Captain Jabez Warren to his beautiful young bride. It was an exact replica of one in her beloved Scotland. But she died a year later, and his own death in mysterious circumstances followed soon after.

Now the castle was the property of Professor Perry Warren and his lovely, impulsive daughter Eve . . . and within hours after moving in they began to feel that they too were doomed to inexplicable deaths.

What were the strange blue lights on the wrecked schooner? Who was the invisible presence in the locked tower room? Did the ghost of Captain Jabez still stalk the castle's empty, echoing halls?

These and many other questions plagued Eve Warren. There was also the problem of the two men who sought her hand, both of whom seemed to harbor their own secrets. And the menace grew with each minute that ticked by. . . .

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